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NOTES AND NEWS.

"In case of rumours of serious unrest amongst Mahometans at Bombay, they are untrue." Such was the telegram which, with ludicrous ineptitude, Lord George Hamilton informed the House of Commons last Tuesday afternoon that he had received a few days before from the Governor of Bombay. The hilarious laughter with which the telegram was greeted in the House of Commons is the measure of Lord George Hamilton's wisdom in making it public. But what is one to think of the officials who sent the telegram? The gravity of the position at Bombay has been indicated in the newspapers for some time past. On March 3, for example, Reuter reported that the deaths from plague in Bombay during the week numbered 1,097—an increase of 15 upon the preceding week—and on Tuesday last the newspapers published a Reuter's telegram reporting serious friction between the Bombay Corporation and the Plague Committee. Cheques, it was said, for Rs. 38,000 had been issued, and there were only Rs. 4,800 in the bank. "There is much unrest in Bombay," the telegram continued, "and the agitation against the plague measures is increasing." In particular there were said to be protests against the new quarantine rules, the system of house visitation by European soldiers, and the introduction of a new system of death registration offensive to the Hindus. "It is thought probable," Reuter added, "that the Mahometans will join the movement," and a later message of the same date reported a large meeting of Mahometans held under the presidency of the Head Moulvi to protest against "the proposed rules for the production of a medical certificate of death, failing which the authorities would require the examination of the corpse even after it had been prepared for interment."

It was when Mr. Swift MacNeill asked for further information with reference to this news that Lord George Hamilton read the remarkable telegram which is printed above. Of course the obvious questions which the telegram suggests are—Why did the Government of Bombay anticipate that there would be rumours of unrest? And what possible grounds could it have for declaring beforehand that any such rumours would be untrue? On the face of the matter, this document, so usefully though indiscreetly published, suggests strange reflections as to the sort of authority which enables the India Office to contradict the statements of the Press. Is the alarming news which appeared in Thursday's newspapers to be regarded as untrue? It is, at any rate, circumstantial enough. Reuter telegraphed from Bombay on Wednesday that serious plague riots had occurred in the native town; that several persons had been killed; that the immediate cause of the outbreak was an attempt by a search party to discover the cause of a Mahometan woman's sickness; and that an enormous crowd of castemen stoned and mobbed the party. The search-party retired, only to return with a force of armed police. The "demand for the surrender of the patient was repeated and again refused."

> As matters were becoming grave, a magistrate, a Parsee, was summoned. He addressed the mob, telling them that it was unwise to oppose the police. Being himself struck, he ordered the police to charge, and four Mahometans were killed and several wounded. The disturbance, however, instead of subsiding, spread with terribly alarming rapidity to Pydhownig, Two-tanks Road, and the Bhendi Bazaar, all the streets and lanes in these districts presenting a spectacle similar to that offered during the riots of 1893. *The Mahometans were joined by the Hindus.* No Christian, either European, Eurasian, or Portuguese, is safe in their hands. Many assaults were reported, and two European soldiers were nearly killed.

How, in the light of this news, is one to regard the Bombay Government's telegram: "In case of rumours of serious unrest amongst Mahometans at Bombay, they are untrue"? Reuter's account went on to say that after a time the excitement subsided, but that cavalry had been ordered from Poona to assist in patrolling the streets, and that the town was in the hands of the military. "In various parts of the city plague ambulances were seized and burned, and attempts were made to set fire to the hospitals." Even the Viceroy seems to have been misled by the "untrue rumours," for he is said to have "telegraphed to Bombay expressing his regret at the loss of life in the plague riots there." Or is this statement merely a part of what the Bombay Government was able to describe (in advance) as untrue? On the whole, we fancy that the remarks of the *Daily Chronicle* (March 10) will commend themselves to impartial observers:—

> The absolute untrustworthiness of official news from India is again illustrated this morning. . . . . There is in Bombay a state of things rivalling the great riots of five years ago, and we are face to face with what is virtually a local rebellion, which has been clearly foreseen by all except the Government. It characteristically denied there was any "serious unrest" among the people, and it is at once confronted with a very grave crisis belying its telegram home. We have got used to the recklessness of official statements from India, and we cite this last instance as an indication to people in this country that they cannot trust the representations of the present rulers of our great dependency.

As for the riots themselves, nothing could be more deplorable. They were confined, no doubt, to the most ignorant section of the population—that, at any rate, is usually the case in Indian rioting—but it is an omen of no small significance that "the Mahometans were joined by the Hindus." The same unexpected alliance was seen at Chitpur last year. Nobody doubts, of course, that the authorities in India desire to stamp out the plague with the least possible offence to the religious and domestic susceptibilities of the Native community, and every Englishman must admire the zeal and the fortitude with which his countrymen in India are discharging an awful and repulsive task. But unfortunately, even where men are dealing with others of the same race and sentiments with themselves, zeal will sometimes outstrip discretion, and it is difficult for Englishmen to conceive the tact, the patience, and the imagination which are required in matters affecting the privacy of Oriental life. Those who have taken the trouble to acquaint themselves with Indian opinion are perfectly well aware that from the first some of the measures adopted to combat the plague—especially the visitation of houses by search parties, sometimes consisting of European soldiers—have excited bitter resentment. If all these measures were absolutely necessary, and if, being necessary, they have always been carried out in the way least likely to give offence, there is nothing more to be said. But after what has taken place—both at Poona and at Bombay—the obvious course for the Government is, one would think, to institute full enquiry into the administration of the plague measures. Meantime it is the bounden duty of every man whose word carries weight in India to entreat her sorely suffering people to be patient and endure.

Further indications of the just and extreme dissatisfaction aroused by the Sedition Bill continue to reach us from India. The Calcutta Bar addressed to the Legislative Council a series of very pointed observations upon the Bill as amended in Select Committee. This is the general summary:

> The result of this Bill, if passed into law, will be to make it penal, amongst other things,
>
> (1) Effectively to criticise the policy of the Government with reference, for example, to the present war beyond the frontier;

(2) Effectively to oppose and to give true utterance to the feelings of the people, or a section of the people, against a proposed tax that may be considered oppressive;

(3) To present a petition for the redress of serious grievances, showing the existance of such grievances hitherto unredressed; and to leave it in the discretion of the Executive Government to prosecute or not.

In other words, it constitutes the government a tyranny, striking at fundamental rights enjoyed by every citizen of every country that boasts a vestige of freedom.

Moreover, Lord George Hamilton and Sir Richard Webster assured the House of Commons that the Bill in no way altered the law. The Calcutta Bar characterises the changes as "sweeping and fundamental." Lord George Hamilton assured the House that hardly any adverse criticisms had come from any quarter unconnected with the Press. The Calcutta Bar will not be suspected of being controlled by the Press; and it points out, further, how the Government smuggled the obnoxious changes into the Bill and rushed it through.

With regard to the general question, I am further directed most respectfully to protest against such sweeping and fundamental changes being introduced as amendments to "a Bill to amend the Indian Penal Code in relation to extra-territorial offences," no single so-called amendment having any relation whatever to extra-territorial offences. This procedure has resulted in the public being first made aware of the proposed changes on December 21, 1897, and the Bill being passed through Select Committee on January 31, 1898.

A less worthy device could not readily be imagined on the part of men posing as statesmen. The marvel is that such weighty protests could be presented within the time and under the circumstances.

The Rafai-am Association, representing public opinion in Oudh, expresses to the Government the alarm of the people. "Taking a broad survey of the country," it says, "no class of the people, from the lowest and poorest to the richest and most enlightened in it, show the least indication of what may be called real disaffection for the Government under which they live." In the course of an effective historical review of the freedom of the Press in India, it quotes Sir Charles (afterwards Lord) Metcalfe's statesmanlike deliverance:

The Act [of 1835, repealing the Press Regulations of 1823-27] evinces to the world that the government of the Company desires no concealment, that it is happy to have the most minute particulars of the Indian administration scrutinised and displayed to the gaze of the universe, that it seeks information and instruction wherever they can be found, and does not wish to rule India as a conquered, ignorant, and enslaved, but as a cherished, enlightened, and free country.

On this we may recall the fact that this Act was passed after "ample discussion and deliberation," and the still more startling fact—startling to our present Indian governors—that Metcalfe had written only a short time previously this very remarkable sentence: "We have no hold on their [our Indian subjects'] affections; more than that, *disaffection is universal*." Once more, was any Indian statesman more viciously badgered by the Press than Lord William Bentinck, and what did he say? Why, that he had learnt more from the Press than from all the other sources of information which had been open to him since he had assumed the government of the country.

To return to the Rafai-am, Section 124A it pronounces "utterly unworkable"—it aims "a great blow at free discussion of public acts and measures."

The doing of a public duty for the public good would certainly not exempt public writers and speakers from prosecution, but whether conviction would necessarily follow is another question. Thus the terrorism of the section is calculated to freeze up all free thought and discussion in matters public and political, the benefit of which India has enjoyed for the last sixty years and more.

Section 153A the Rafai-am regards as "likely to be a dangerous innovation, as it is not suited to the condition and peculiar circumstances of India." It will even "make hazardous the position of persons who are identified with the various active reforming agencies in the country." The Hon. Mr. Chalmers did not attempt to prove by facts or figures the need of it. The assignment of such unusual powers to Magistrates, says the Rafai-am, "has produced something like consternation among the literate and respectable classes of people in India."

The proposal transcends all bounds of present political requirements of the country, and consequent propriety, and arms the Magistrate, a subordinate executive officer of Government in the Mofussil, where public opinion is very imperfectly developed, with powers which are not only sure to be abused in practice, but the existence of which, if sanctioned by the legislature, will remain a lasting cause of humiliation of the Press in India, and serve as a terror which will dry up all feelings of independence in its conductors, who are admittedly the sources of its vitality and usefulness.

But the Rafai-am must understand that Lord George Hamilton knows better than Bentinck and Metcalfe: the Press is devoid of usefulness, and ought to be deprived of vitality. Of course, Sir Richard Garth has given the reason.

Now, let us come to the other side of India, and look in at the meeting convened on January 29 at the Framji Cowasji Institute in Bombay by the Bombay Presidency Association. We have already referred to the memorial then adopted. Here is a word from the Chairman, the Hon. Mr. C. Setalvad, on the new powers of Magistrates and the degradation of the High Court.

Under the existing law, offences under Section 124A are exclusively triable by Sessions Courts, so that in the Presidency towns and in certain jury districts the accused has the advantage of a jury; and when the trial is by Assessors the accused has the inestimable advantage of an appeal to the High Court. It is now proposed, gentlemen, to allow Magistrates of the First Class, who are, it must be remembered, also executive officers, to try these offences. The result of this innovation will be that the great safeguard of a trial by jury will be entirely removed, and in certain cases—namely, when a Presidency Magistrate awards a sentence of six months, or a Magistrate in the Mofussil a sentence of one month, there will be no appeal whatever. Where a higher sentence is awarded in the Mofussil the appeal will lie only to the Sessions Court and not to the High Court. The revisional powers of the High Courts will not be of much avail, for in almost every trial for sedition the most important question is the construction of the incriminating writing or speech, which is a question of fact; and the High Courts do not ordinarily interfere on questions of fact. Gentlemen, *what has contributed most to the consolidation of British rule in the contentment and loyalty of the people of India is faith in British justice; and it is the High Court, gentlemen, which is held in great veneration by the people and justly regarded as the palladium of liberty, that has contributed the most to deepen that faith.* (Hear, hear.) I, for one, gentlemen, always view with the greatest apprehension any measure that has the effect of in any way withdrawing of making less effectual the control of that Court.

On the same occasion, Mr. Chambers expressly asserted that those who represented the law of India as in this point the same as the law of England, "were doing it to throw dust in the eyes of the public." Such is the obvious effect, whatever their intention.

The Bill for the amendment of the Stamp Act, now under consideration, is conceived on like lines of severity. The Council of the Bombay Presidency Association has forwarded to the Government a long list of points indicating extraordinary forgetfulness of the customs and circumstances of the Indian population. The Government is so desperately hard up that it has determined to give another turn to the screw upon the poverty of the people. Thus, a simple acknowledgment of a debt exceeding Rs.20, whether attested or not, is now liable to a one anna stamp; and the Bill proposes to make it liable, when attested, to an *ad valorem* duty as a bond of its amount or value. The result will obviously be either to add a fresh tax of a vexatious character or to extinguish attestations. Among an illiterate people here is a fine chance for an unscrupulous saukar, or a bad stroke at the rayat's credit, or a dip into his purse. One would have thought that the Government would be careful to encourage, rather than to discourage, the provision of some evidence for the diminution and just decision of lawsuits. But the Government wants money, and the Legal Member says an attested acknowledgment of a debt is in the nature of a bond and ought to be stamped as such. Both of them forget that India is not England.

Again, the Hon. Mr. Chalmers recommends the duty on equitable mortgages by stating that it is taken from the English Act. But he makes the Indian duty *double* the English duty. The definitions of bill of exchange and bill of exchange payable on demand are so wide that they "would not exempt from duty even instructions for payment given by the head of an office to his subordinates, or by the head of a household to the members of his family or his servants." The proposals as to promissory notes appear to ignore the difference between their Indian and English applications; and the alteration is justified by reference to the English law, although since 1878 the Indian legislature has hitherto studiously observed the difference. Section 12 actually makes it a criminal offence, punishable by a fine up to Rs. 100, if the person whose

duty it is to cancel an adhesive stamp fails to do so in the manner prescribed. Under Section 64, "a barrister giving honest advice to his client in a matter of stamp duty is liable to conviction by a criminal court and the payment of a fine of Rs. 5,000." These are isolated points, and this is the Council's general conclusion:

The Council apprehends that the alterations in the existing law, which have been proposed in the Bill, will appreciably add to the already heavy burdens of taxation under which the people of this country suffer, will throw the greater part of the increased taxation on the poorer population, who are already in a deplorable condition of poverty, will greatly inconvenience ordinary business transactions, will injure the credit and borrowing capacity of the agricultural classes, and will otherwise prove detrimental to public interests.

Let us record another "Reuterism" telegraphed from Calcutta on Wednesday:—

The excitement which was first aroused by the proposed sedition legislation has practically died out.

And the newspapers positively printed this intelligence.

It is well to note that the retirement from the Kuram in 1881, for which Lord Roberts, last Monday, so severely blamed Lord Ripon's Government, was decided upon on advice tendered by Lord Roberts himself in a memorandum dated 29th May, 1880, written in Kabul (and not, as Lord Northbrook stated, on his return from Kandahar). So, too, Lord Roberts's condemnation of the Lawrence system of border defence, as involving periodical destruction of the crops and villages of the tribesmen, is singularly pointless, because that system had, as a whole, worked so well that for eight years before its abandonment by Lord Lytton there had only once been occasion to send a punitive expedition—and that of only three days' duration—against the tribesmen. On the other hand, no English General has more cause to blush for the methods pursued towards the brave mountaineers for whom he asks our sympathy than the invader of Khost, and the commander who, in the autumn of 1879, drove the people of the valleys to the south-west of Kabul to such despair, by confiscating the greater part of their winter supplies of food and forage and by burning much of the little it was beyond his power to carry off, that the whole country rose in arms and nearly overwhelmed him and his scattered troops.

We are glad to see that Mr. John Morley has given notice of his intention to move for a return setting out (1) the number of wars and military operations beyond the frontiers of British India in which the Government of India has been engaged since 1858, and the occasions and localities of such wars; (2) the number approximately of British and British Indian forces engaged in such operations; and (3) the cost of these military operations, and the amount of any contributions towards such cost.

When last year everybody was talking of the marvellous discoveries of Professor Bose in the field of electricity, Mr. C. E. Schwann and Sir Henry Roscoe prepared a memorial praying for the establishment of a central laboratory for advanced teaching and research in connexion with the Presidency College at Calcutta. The memorial was signed by such eminent men of science as Lord Kelvin, and was forwarded to the Government of India for its "favourable consideration." Mr. Schwann has now received from the India Office the reply of the Government of India to this admirable proposal. Sir A. Godley writes:—

It is estimated that the provision even of a moderately complete laboratory would entail an initial outlay on buildings, fittings, and apparatus, of at least Rs. 600,000. In the present state of the finances of India, the Government of India regret that they cannot entertain a scheme involving so large an expenditure. I am to ask you to be so good as to communicate this decision to Lord Kelvin and the other signatories of the memorial transmitted by you.

The sum in question is Rx. 60,000—or some £40,000. But "in the present state of the finances of India" the Government of India "cannot entertain a scheme involving so large an expenditure." And yet—and yet—such is the state of the finances of India that the Government of India refused the other day a proffered contribution towards the cost—four or five millions, at a moderate estimate—of the war beyond the Indian frontier! The contrast is merely stupendous. No doubt the reason is that, while the war can be of no possible use to India, a physical laboratory would be. For not only may scientific discovery greatly change the course of commerce in India and elsewhere, but the educational value of such an institution in a country capable of producing a Professor Bose is incalculable. We commend the Indian Government's excuse to the notice of the British Press and public.

Major Evans Gordon has been defeated in Stepney, though the majority for his party in the constituency was at the General Election 472. This is a satisfactory rebuff for the former Political Agent in Jhalawar, whose oppressive treatment of the Native prince of that State has played an important part in the Stepney Election. It may possibly, indeed, have turned the scale against Major Evans Gordon, as the majority of his Liberal opponent, Mr. Steadman, is only 20.

The ratepayers of London have by their votes successfully resisted Lord G. Hamilton's and Lord Onslow's attack upon the London County Council. But bureaucracy is supreme in India, and the campaign against municipal institutions there proceeds unchecked.

The Hon. P. Ananda Charlu has edited a useful pamphlet just published by the Indian Relief Society at Calcutta, reproducing the Hon. A. M. Bose's speech on the Resolution of the National Congress respecting the recent reorganisation of the Educational Service in India. This measure of Lord Elgin's Council is, as Mr. Charlu says, "a manifest type of injustice to the indigenous talent of India." It is no wonder that "as such it has called forth a chorus of disapprobation from all men who were at liberty to speak out their minds." The very expression of limitation—"who were at liberty to speak out their minds"—shows the dangerous trend of the present ideas of Indian government. Mr. Charlu says most justly:—

One would have thought that, of all Indian Services, the Educational was *the one* which Indians should all but absorb, reserving to Europeans the administrative and directive functions in connexion with it; for that Service lies altogether outside the sphere of all political considerations. And yet reasonable expectations have been unaccountably baulked, and our best men are being alienated from a vocation which affords the greatest scope for the promotion of unmixed public good.

We join in Mr. Charlu's regret, and trust that his pamphlet may find sympathetic readers in England, with a view to "a reversal of this narrow policy and a substitution in its place of a more generous and more just one."

From Mr. Bose's eloquent speech we take a sentence or two showing the kernel of the complaint:—

What the Scheme proposes is now for the first time to introduce two distinct divisions or branches in the Superior Educational Service of the country, the higher branch to be called the Indian Educational Service, and to be filled by persons appointed in England; and the lower branch, namely, the Provincial Educational Service, to be filled, by reason, I presume, of the inferiority of its position, by recruitment in India. . . . . Previous to the year 1880, the higher Service was open to natives of India, and open on exactly the same pay as to a European member. . . . . There was neither a bar to admission nor a difference in the scale of pay. But about that year began the downward march, and it was declared that natives of India taken into that service should begin on Rs. 333, or two-thirds of Rs. 500, the pay of a European member. . . . . The scale of 333 went on until, in 1889, the pay was further reduced for Indian graduates of the highest English Universities to Rs. 250; and we do not know what further reduction may yet be carried out.

The pecuniary necessities of the Government and the determination to crush the intellectual life of India may soon bring the figure to Rs.150, or less.

Turn now to the maximum figures:—

A native of India, however high his education may have been in the Universities of Europe . . . . can, at the end of his life in the Provincial Service, expect to rise only to Rs. 700, possibly after 25 or more years of service . . . . Whereas in the higher branch, which is open only to Europeans, at the end of 10 years alone, the salary, it is now provided, *shall* be Rs. 1,000. Or look at the matter in another way. A European member will get Rs. 700 a month—and he will not stop there—at the end of *four* years of service; while an Indian member, who may have taken the same or a higher degree, will at the end of his life draw no more than that amount of Rs. 700, and will probably enjoy the further honour of being the subordinate of the former. (Shame.)

A shame it is, certainly. And one is not surprised that the public comments on the disgraceful measure ruefully recall the neglected terms of Her Majesty's Proclamation in 1858. "For the first time in the history of British India," says the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* with justifiable bitterness, "our countrymen have been placed under serious disabilities in an open and avowed manner by the direct order of the Secretary of State."

THE CANDOUR OF LORD ROBERTS.

LORD ROBERTS OF KANDAHAR has spoken with soldierly candour and directness, and his speech confirms beyond all dispute the vitality of the Forward policy —and at the same time its absolute futility. Lord Roberts has been the inspirer and the foremost technical adviser of the Government. He has given himself away—himself and the Government. Was it not Lord Mansfield who warned a new colonial judge to give his judgments boldly but on no account to state his reasons? Lord Roberts has injudiciously stated his reasons. Happily, therefore, the mystery that naturally encompasses the projects of a great man, specially versed in military affairs, personally acquainted with the situation, and clothed in the glories of successful generalship, has fallen away from Lord Roberts. By the arguments set forth in his speech, he furnished a plain means of judgment as to his policy. It is to be remembered, indeed, that he spoke expressly and solely "as a soldier," regarding the financial side of the question as "not his business." This simple fact at once takes the pith out of his contention. Suppose that, in fact, it should prove to be the case that his plan is the cheapest in the long run; what does that matter if the country is now absolutely unable to afford it? Lord Roberts might just as well have pointed to the yawning vacuity of the Calcutta treasury, and said, "Behold, the glory of India is departed!" It simply comes to this, that, if India cannot be held against Russia except on Lord Roberts's plan, then the British Empire in India is doomed. We, for our part, deny this vehemently. Lord Onslow, who took his cue from Lord George Hamilton, rather traversed the views of Lord Roberts; and the confusion was brought to a climax when Lord Lansdowne sat upon Lord Onslow and supported Lord Roberts. The Duke of Devonshire, as we anticipated, threw over the late Marquis of Hartington, and he was the only mind acute enough to reconcile conflicting Ministers. But, amid all the confusion of tongues, one thing rings out clear as a bell; the Government, and the military advisers of the Government, are determined to push their Forward policy to the Oxus, restrained only by the particular circumstances of the day. The recent big debate in the Commons has not even scotched the snake; it has only made the wretched reptile draw in its horns for a moment, and barely so much. In all essentials, in fact, it really issued in a vote of confidence to the Government.

Lord Roberts reminds us of our unfortunate obligation to defend the Amír of Afghanistan. Of course, there the obligation is, and we must frankly recognise it; there is no need to discuss the wisdom or unwisdom of it, or whether the Amír wanted it or cares a button for it. Now, between India and Afghanistan lies an enormous range of lofty mountains, inhabited by tribes capable of marshalling some 200,000 of the bravest and hardiest fighters on the globe. "The all-important question, therefore," said Lord Roberts, "is, by what means can we ensure that this enormous military strength will be used for us, and not against us?" Very well; Lord Roberts first demolishes the adverse policy of let-alone. He draws a lurid picture of the atrocities the tribesmen commit among themselves, and of the punitive expeditions that have cost us so much in blood and money, and inflicted such cruel misery on the innocent families of the delinquents. We might return the *tu quoque* of the recent campaigns. But we face the point squarely. In the first place we deny that it is our duty in any way to supervise the morals of the tribesmen. Fine missionaries we make, in all conscience! And if the tribes entertain the notion that the less they see of us the better, we say they have a perfect right to their opinion. If indeed we can, as we have already done, "civilise" them by opening up works and markets within our own border for them, then such agencies will produce their natural effects, and indeed the only effects we can possibly achieve—excepting always killing and burning, and so forth. Lord Roberts scoffs at this system. Yet let him follow it out, as we have done in these columns, historically; and he will see at once how far he is right in his facts. We repeat that the punitive expeditions steadily decreased, and that during Lord Ripon's viciously despised Viceroyalty there was not a single one found necessary. Further, we connect this signal fact with the distinct knowledge on the part of Frontier officers that an expedition would be a very black mark against them. The let-alone policy was conspicuously successful so long as it was openly recognised at Calcutta.

What Lord Roberts recommends is apparently the application of Sir Robert Sandeman's policy all along the frontier. Well, but in the first place he has to catch his Sandemans. These are the very men whom we all want to get hold of; that is, men who enter into the minds of the tribesmen, and deal with them from the tribal point of view. But, supposing the Sandemans are got, there is another party to the business, and that is the tribes. Now Lord Roberts neglects the fundamental differences between the Baluchistan and Afridi tribesmen—a point in which even Sir Richard Temple declares him to be wholly mistaken. The mild Baluchi was as wax in the hands of the astute Sandeman, and that is how the map of Baluchistan is coloured red, and the English flag flies from Quetta over the Pishin Valley. But your Afridi is not soft as wax; he is a hard customer, as hard as steel. "Where snow falls, there is freedom," says Emerson; and the Afridi is determined to be free. The Tirah campaign should have taught us so much at least. The plan that was successful—disastrously successful, too—in Baluchistan will not work, even with a Sandeman, in the Afridi highlands. Indeed, if Sir Robert Sandeman had been placed farther north, his method would have developed on quite other lines, adapted to the particular tribesmen he had to deal with. Anyhow, Lord Roberts insists that we, the English, are bound to establish our influence over this refractory belt of tribesmen—200,000 of them. How is it to be done? Lord Roberts, unfortunately, did not really argue it out. "The forward policy must, in my opinion, be gradually and judiciously but steadily pursued until we obtain political control over the robber-haunted no-man's-land which lies on our immediate frontier." There is his general policy: gradual, judicious, steady encroachment on the tribes. How? By "improving and extending our frontier roads, and, so far as financial considerations permit, our railway communications," which looks as if Lord Roberts would give Russia battle in the wilds of Central Asia. Very ingenious and philanthropic, no doubt; and very consonant with other people's "roads and positions." But there is this difficulty: the tribesmen regard a road as the symbol of the loss of their independence, and we have neither men nor money to establish secure posts controlling a territory of 70,000 square miles and an armed population of 200,000 men. We should want a few Klondikes in the treasury at Calcutta; and, even then, where are the men—and the mules?

Here, then, is a lively nest of hornets, and we evidently cannot crush it bodily. No, but let us stick our finger in it tentatively, says Lord Roberts. To that we rejoin with an admonition to his valorous lordship not to be surprised if that finger gets stung pretty badly. What is this policy but a continuation of the irritating frontier policy of ambitious officials, which is undoubtedly responsible for the long list of punitive expeditions—at any rate more responsible than any other cause, or all other causes combined. Lord Roberts anticipates, however, that the same causes will no longer work the same effects; that, on the contrary, the tribesmen will love us, and, more than that, will hate the Russians! Now, in the name of common sense, what paradoxical fatuity is this? Why on earth should they hate the Russians? Nay, does it not obviously stand to reason that they would hail the Russians as deliverers? But, after all, that is not the real question. The real question is, Why should they allow the Russians to pass through their territory? If we respect their independence, the Russians, in the future of fancy, will come among them as invaders, and will be received accordingly. If we follow Lord Roberts's advice and encroach on their independence, it is we that will be treated as invaders: the first bullets will be for us. Lord Roberts thinks we can gradually muzzle them, and dominate their spirit. We should like to hear from him again by and by, after he has had a little quiet confabulation with Sir William Lockhart, and compared notes on 1879-80 and 1897-98. If there is one thing more certain than another, it is this: Lord Roberts is playing superbly the game of Russia.

A final word as to Russia. We repeat emphatically—for the benefit of Lord Kimberley, too—that Lord Law-

rence's policy covers the present situation. Lawrence distinctly had in view such Russian advance as has now taken place. His policy, therefore, remains as sound to-day as it was on the day when he first enunciated it, or began to shape it in his brain. Why, Lord Roberts himself, in 1880, was clearly decided in favour of letting the web of Russian difficulties extend to the very mouth of the Khyber. Why, then, not also to the very mouth of the Kuram, and of the Bolan? And why should there be any fresh policy to-day? Russia, at any moment, could take possession of Kabul and fortify it pretty effectively before an English army could reach the city; and that, too, even if the Indian railhead were already at Dakka. But Russia is tied, first by agreement, and second by policy. Again, what would the Amír think if our "control," in the sense of Lord Roberts and Mr. Curzon, extended to the borders of his land? But we must have done, and limit ourselves to two points more. First: Will Lord Roberts set down in black and white the present and prospective force of Russia in Central Asia; mark the dispositions of such force, actual or probable; assume that they march against Afghanistan, or India, and work out the details? Will he take up *seriatim* propositions set forth by Colonel Hanna, and show that these propositions are wrong? We hold firmly that, if we stay stubbornly within the Indus Valley frontier, Russia cannot touch India, and dare not touch Afghanistan. And we challenge Lord Roberts to work out a detailed refutation of Colonel Hanna's arguments, with the assurance that we are quite open to conviction. Second: We again emphasize the difference between warrior and statesman, and repeat the wise counsel of Sir Lepel Griffin that on questions of policy the advice of military men should be neither asked nor listened to. Lord Roberts spoke expressly "as a soldier," and his arguments at best are but part of the considerations that must be taken into account by responsible statesmen.

INDIA THROUGH ROSEATE GLASSES.[1]

MR. LEE-WARNER'S readers will do well to remember the old adage which tells us that "nothing is so deceptive as facts—except figures." This little book is crammed with both of them. It contains a mass of correct information, supported by unimpeachable statistics. It is written in an agreeable and perspicuous style. It is the work of a man of excellent abilities, who has filled high offices in the State, and has enjoyed exceptional opportunities of learning the truth on the subjects upon which he writes. But the picture which he draws of India—of the character of its Government—of the methods of its administration—of the condition of its people—appears to us to be altogether inaccurate and misleading. Some *suppressio veri* may be excusable in a book which attempts to treat so extensive a subject within the compass of less than 200 pages. But there is something worse than a mere suppression of the truth; something of which we find abundant examples in the volume before us.

We do not mean to accuse Mr. Lee-Warner of wilfully deceiving his readers. We have no doubt that he has written in perfect good faith, and that he really believes India to be as well-governed, as prosperous, and as contented as he represents her to be. The speeches of Secretaries of State, and the despatches published in Government blue-books, have familiarised us with the policy of those who prophesy smooth things, and proclaim peace where there is no peace. Mr. Lee-Warner has neither the feebleness nor the ignorance of Lord George Hamilton. But the spirit and tenor of this book are in exact accordance with the language of that eminent statesman, when he makes light of the deficit in an Indian budget, or defends a frontier war. This complacent optimism—this resolution to look at things only on their pleasant side—blinds our officials to the actual dangers which threaten our Eastern Empire. If the India which Mr. Lee-Warner describes had any real existence, it would be an earthly Paradise; for his book does not notice a single grievance or abuse which requires to be reformed. He reproduces the exploded fallacy that India is very lightly taxed. He treats the large fortunes made by English merchants in Calcutta and Bombay as clear additions to the wealth of the country. And he regards the Home Charges as judicious expenditure in the cheapest market.

We are told in the preface that the book is intended to train the rising generation in the knowledge of their duties and their rights. The author thinks that they ought to know how they are governed, and what is expected of them; what becomes of the taxes they pay; what is done to keep them and their property safe, and to protect them from disease and famine. He proceeds to impart information upon these interesting questions: and we gather that the duties of an Indian citizen consist in loyally co-operating with a paternal Government in all its measures, especially in matters of education, sanitary improvement, the maintenance of order, and the repression of crime. This no doubt is very wholesome advice—though, if the author had been perfectly candid, he would probably have added to his list of duties Abernethy's famous maxim, "Read my book." So much for the duties. But we look in vain through Mr. Lee-Warner's pages for any enumeration of the Indian citizen's rights. Is it one of his rights to have the examinations for the Civil Service of his country held in the country itself, and not ten thousand miles away? Is it his right to have some voice in the expenditure of the national revenue? Can he claim not to be tried by an officer who is at once his prosecutor and his judge: and not to be kept for months in prison by a Government ukase, without a trial, and without even a formal accusation? These rights appear reasonable. They are rights which the Indian citizen does not at present enjoy. But this manual of civic ethics has not a word to say about any of them. To the question, "What becomes of the taxes I pay?" Mr. Lee-Warner thinks it sufficient to reply that the Government issues an annual budget. He must have a very low idea of the intelligence of the Indian citizen, if he imagines that such an answer disposes of the matter. What the Indian citizen really wants to know is this: Why are not the taxes I pay expended for my welfare, instead of being squandered upon objects in which I have no interest? But to such a question this volume gives no hint of a reply.

Municipal self-government, a subject naturally of great interest to the citizen, furnishes Mr. Lee-Warner with materials for some of his most roseate pictures. He praises the Government for establishing Municipal Boards; he praises the Boards not only for the excellent work they do, but for the dignity and importance which the position of a Municipal Commissioner confers. "If the citizens unite to oppose abuses of authority and suggest improvements, their views are sure to carry the day." Again, "their votes and opinions may become a force which acts upon the local authorities. Each citizen can thus feel that he is a part of the government of his own town. He is raised to a new sense of right and duty, and the prosperity of the town becomes a source of pride to its whole population." Of Calcutta he says, "Municipal honours have added to its growth and lustre. The office of Commissioner is one of dignity, and it becomes a stepping-stone to higher positions." The Bombay Commissioners hold a still more exalted rank. "The annual revenue at their disposal is about 67 lakhs of rupees; and the administration of this revenue as a public trust for the welfare of so large a population cannot fail to be a powerful factor in the political education of the people. The splendour of the municipal office is sufficient of itself to indicate the dignity and importance of self-government in Bombay." It cannot be supposed that, in writing like this, Mr. Lee-Warner was poking fun at the Indian citizen. It is possible he was not aware that, even when he was inditing these magniloquent sentences, the Government was preparing a scheme intended to destroy the independence of the principal municipalities, and to reduce them to mere mouthpieces of autocratic officialism.

We do not think that Lee-Warnerism is likely to be the prevailing cult among Indian citizens of the future. We hope and believe that the rising generation will take a truer and a manlier view of their duties and their rights; and that, while they maintain a spirit of steadfast loyalty to the Government, they will not cease to appeal to England's sense of justice for the introduction of those reforms which have been so ably and so patiently advocated by the National Congress.

[1] "The Citizen of India," by W. Lee-Warner, C.S.I. (Macmillan and Co.).

A FIRST IMPRESSION OF INDIA.

By Donald N. Reid.

"OH, how hot it is!" cried Olive May to her escort, the attentive Mr. Schmidt, who, as dawn was breaking on a piping hot day in the summer of 1878, appeared with a cup of fresh tea at the door of the ladies' first-class compartment in the mail train from Calcutta.

"This is nothing to what it will be later on," said Schmidt. "But you will soon get out of it, since you only go as far as Arrah. Pity poor me when I begin to encounter the burning dust storms of Northern India."

"You have been long enough in the country to get acclimatised," replied Olive, who was a little cross and fretful. "By this time you should be as much accustomed to dust and heat as the sailors of tramp steamers are to drowning."

"I am afraid we Europeans never get acclimatised," answered good-natured Mr. Schmidt. "There goes the gong. In another hour we shall be at Mokameh, where we breakfast."

The little man then hurried off with the tea-things to the refreshment room, and bundled into his carriage as the train was moving.

At Mokameh, Olive May was the only lady present at the breakfast table. The room was full of men who were on their way to Bombay to catch the mail steamer for England. Most of these men sat down to table in extremely light and airy costumes, and the girl was not favourably impressed by their appearance. She had yet to learn that comfort is the first consideration in the mind of the Anglo-Indian when he is travelling, and that he is seen at his worst on a railway journey. What he resents most of all is the intrusion of a native into his carriage. Respectable, God-fearing fathers of families have been known to behave like raving lunatics when the company of an inoffensive Indian gentleman has been thrust upon them. The native gentleman's objection to the close proximity of the beef-eating Englishman is just as pronounced. For example, one outspoken Rájá, in a burst of confidence to an English friend, admitted that: "I like you sahibs well enough; but there is one thing that I cannot stand in you, and that is your strong smell!" However, the natives, being more diplomatic than the Europeans, manage to repress their feelings when a train is crowded, and take whatever vacant seats they can get.

The heat of the refreshment room and the smell of the cooked food quickly drove Miss Olive May to the platform, where she discovered numberless vendors of fruit and milk moving up and down in front of the long train, offering the contents of their baskets to the passengers.

"D-u-d-h chahiyá-h d-u-d-h," was the plaintive cry which particularly attracted her attention.

"What is that man saying?" enquired Olive of her companion.

"He is a goálá (milkman) selling his milk, which is the favourite food of all natives—young and old."

"Then they ought to be stouter and stronger-looking than they are," said quick-witted Olive.

"Ah! poor creatures, milk is only consumed by the masses on high days and holidays," replied Mr. Schmidt. "Their own cows are miserable, under-fed animals that scarcely give more than a tumblerful at a milking."

"Why is that? I thought the cow was a sacred animal which received the best of care and good food from the Hindus."

"The Indian cow is one of the most neglected animals on the face of this earth," explained the German. "But I should only bore you if I entered into a long dissertation on the subject."

They were now standing in front of the railway bookstall.

"You want a paper to while away the hours between this and Arrah," said Schmidt. "Here is the *Pioneer*, the leading paper of India."

"Dear me, what a price to pay for a daily paper—four annas. Equal to six-pence, isn't it?"

"Not quite, I wish it were!" laughed her companion. "But still four annas is an absurd price to pay."

"I miss the atrocity posters of my native land, which so loudly proclaim the depraved tastes of the British public," said Olive. "The last sight that caught my eye on the way to Tilbury was a poster with the startling announcement, 'Heartless bigamy case. Man with seven wives and 46 children: Sentence.'"

"We are not immaculate in India," laughed Schmidt, "although we refrain from advertising our sins."

He then saw Olive to her carriage and left her to her own reflections.

"And this is India," soliloquised the girl, as the train was speeding across the alluvial plain which lies between Mokameh and Patna. "Can anything be more desolate looking! Not a vestige of anything green; the very trees and their leaves covered with dust, and all the fields bare and arid-looking. Look at those poor cattle, no bigger than donkeys; and the children attending to them are just as thin and pitiful-looking, clad in dirty pocket-handkerchiefs attached to a string round the waist. That poor mendicant whom I saw at Mokameh in a ragged threadbare blanket, and with his body besmeared with ashes, is in his way a true exponent of the condition of life which I see around me. Yes, I think that it would be a good idea to send some of those poor mendicants to England for the purpose of giving smug Britishers a glimpse of real life in this God-forsaken country. Oh! look at the huts the people live in—miserable hovels. This paper is full of glowing accounts of the war in Afghanistan; and distressing details are given of the famines in Madras, Bombay, and Northern India; but I suppose these wretched natives of Behar are understood to be in a flourishing condition because they manage to exist!" And the girl, throwing the *Pioneer* away from her, pointed to a group of half-starved looking natives as the train slowed down to enter Patna city station.

"Well, what do you think of the country, now that you have had a fair look at it?" said Mr. Schmidt, coming to Olive's carriage door for a chat.

"It will haunt me in my dreams for years. I never saw anything so wretched as the appearance of the people and of their cattle," replied Olive May, with tears in her voice. "Oh, Mr. Schmidt, if they are average specimens of the peasants and of the cattle of the country, then India is indeed a very sick and helpless patient, who requires most gentle nursing."

"Tut, tut!" said the German. "You must not come to hasty conclusions. This is really the worst time of the year to see the country and its people. The crops are all off the ground, and the rayats and their cattle are on short commons until the maize and millet of the rainy season begin to ripen. These people are accustomed to being starved. Chronic famine, you know, is one of the diseases of the infancy of nations."

"But I was always under the impression that India had long passed its infancy," retorted Miss May, with heightened colour.

"Ah! you are just fresh from Radical England, so I won't presume to argue with you. My business is in buying and selling lac; and I have no time to waste in studying questions of political economy, which would not be appreciated in my own country when I return to Germany with my little pile."

"But you have eyes to see and ears to hear," said Olive, who was now thoroughly roused. "Or is it that the condition of the masses is so utterly hopeless that you avoid thinking of it?"

"I can only repeat that it is not my business to bother about the condition of the people of India. You must tackle your brother Frank on the subject when you meet him at Arrah. He is collector of one of the most important districts in the North-West Provinces; and Baniyapur is the richest town in Northern India."

"What do you call a rich town?" said Miss May, who was not inclined to allow the subject to drop. "This is Patna, the capital of Behar. Behar is the garden of India. I suppose you call this a rich town; and the poor starvelings in their villages are accepted as well-to-do peasants."

"You really ought not to allow first impressions to run away with you in this manner," remonstrated Schmidt; and with the view of changing the subject, he added: "The next station is Bankipur, and after that comes Dinapur, where we get tiffin."

"A good tiffin is evidently of greater interest to you than the condition of the poor in India," was Olive's parting shot at the little German as he made a rush for his carriage.

"A week of that young woman would be the death of

me," groaned poor Mr. Schmidt as he threw himself down at full length on the seat of his carriage. "How different she is from her brother, Frank May, the collector of Baniyapur, who never by any chance bothers his head about abstruse subjects which are much better left alone. Life is too short to worry oneself over the misfortunes of other people. However, I suppose a year or two of India will take all the superfluous energy out of Miss May; until then she will be a perfect nuisance, and I am not sorry that I shall see the last of her at Arrah."

With these comforting reflections Mr. Schmidt shut his eyes and tried to get forty winks before the train reached Dinapur.

THE WEEK IN PARLIAMENT.

BY OUR OWN ONLOOKER.

INDIA and Indian affairs have been to the front on almost every day during the past week in Parliament. Before I proceed to refer to the different matters in something like chronological order, I propose to pick out a gem of Ministerial ineptitude contributed by Lord George Hamilton on Tuesday. It was not only a foolish answer, but foolish even for him. Mr. Swift MacNeill had asked if rumours about friction between the Bombay Corporation and the Plague Committee, with respect to the suppression of the plague, were correct. Lord George said frankly enough that he did not know, but had telegraphed out for information—a reasonable enough reply. And then, to the vast amusement of the House, he produced a telegram, and said with sublime innocence, "But a few days ago I received a telegram from the Governor of Bombay to this effect, 'In case of rumours of serious unrest among the Mahometans at Bombay they are untrue.'"

There was of course a roar of laughter at this naïve revelation. The word "unrest," that pet expression of this incapable official, lent an added touch of comicality to the business, but the chief joke was the delightful revelation it gave of how "information" is supplied to the India Office. What led the Governor of Bombay to think that rumours of unrest would reach this country? Why should he be so anxious to contradict in advance anything that might be said, or to deny anything that might occur? It was so deliciously obvious that Lord George had read publicly something that had been intended only as a private "tip," if I may use a vulgarism; and his look of pleased pride at his own smartness, followed by an air of bewilderment when the laugh broke out, was distinctly precious.

To go back to last Thursday, I observed with no little interest that Mr. Brookfield, a Tory member, asked how it was that no Native officer or soldier could gain the Victoria Cross, no matter how conspicuous his bravery had been. Lord George replied that these men had an Order of Merit instead; it carries with it an increase of pay; it was the equivalent to the Victoria Cross, and that there were very grave objections to any alteration of the system—objections which were not particularised. He was questioned by several members who wanted to know if, supposing the Native officers and men wished to be made eligible for the Victoria Cross, their wishes would be granted. All the Indian Secretary could say was the feeble remark "I can give no other answer," and at length the Speaker had to rescue him!

But beyond all doubt the chief event of the parliamentary week was the debate on Monday night in the Lords, when Lord Roberts explained his views (that is, his present views) on the Forward Policy. There was a great crowd to hear him, peeresses by the dozen sitting in the side galleries, while Privy Councillors jostled each other in front of the Throne. Lord Roberts spoke from the cross-benches, and his speech had not only been carefully prepared, but even printed and distributed to some before its delivery. It was too long and elaborate to be dealt with fully here, but I may say that it was the speech of a soldier and not of a statesman. Moreover, even as a soldier Lord Roberts was arguing against opinions he had previously put on record, and it is generally believed he is at direct variance with Sir Donald Stewart. The speech was ultra-forward in tone. He out-Curzoned even Mr. Curzon. The policy of forty years ago, the Lawrence policy, he threw over. We are to subjugate the frontier tribes—this was the only way of gaining their allegiance. He had much of a blood-curdling nature to say about the approach of Russia. So far from the forward policy having had anything to do with recent outbreaks, he actually declared they were the result of a want of forward policy; we had been too half-hearted, too timid! In a word, he beat the big drum in a manner worthy of Sir George White, who has been labelled by Sir William Harcourt "a commander-in-chief on the stump." And as to expense—well, Lord Roberts is a soldier, and he left that trifling consideration to others.

Of course, Lord Onslow could not ignore it. He was forced to confess that Lord Roberts's policy would entail an expenditure that India was wholly unable to bear. The present was not an opportune moment—and so on and so forth. In a word, Lord Onslow, who talked with a shudder about "Russia's gigantic strides," made a half-and-half speech, letting "I dare not," or rather "I cannot afford," wait upon "I would." Lord Lansdowne, as perhaps befits a War Secretary, took a bolder line and backed Lord Roberts. He also threw over the Lawrence policy. We must "exercise control" over the frontier tribes, he remarked grimly, and must "respect their qualified independence"—very qualified, it struck me.

I was glad to hear Lord Ripon, one of the few men who have as Viceroy faced the military clique and refused to do its bidding. He spoke straight out. This forward policy, he said, was by no means new. It had caused the first Afghan War, the second Afghan War, and had been chiefly responsible for the recent troubles. Moreover, he showed that Lord Lansdowne's views were not in keeping with those of Lord George Hamilton nor with those of Lord Salisbury, as expressed even so recently as the beginning of this Session. It was significant, I thought, that Lord Northbrook, a Liberal Unionist, and a man who has been Under-Secretary and Secretary for India as well as Viceroy, acknowledged that much of our recent trouble beyond the frontier was the result of the perfectly justifiable suspicion entertained by the tribes. Of course this is obvious enough, but coming from a friend of the Government it carries added weight. The debate ended with a few remarks, interspersed with yawns, by the Duke of Devonshire, who said he really could not see any divergence of opinion between Lord Lansdowne and Lord Salisbury. The Duke summed up his views in the euphemistic phrase that while the Government threw over the Lawrence policy, they "still desired to cultivate friendly relations with the border tribes!" And then, when Lord Kimberley had declared that Lord Roberts's policy of bringing all the frontier tribes under our direct control would prove most calamitous to India, the talking ceased, or as the official report put it, "the subject then dropped." The debate, however, was useful as showing the clear and definite policy of unlimited fighting proposed by the military school, the equally clear and definite policy of non-aggression of the opponents of that school, and the half-and-half, undecided, and hand-to-mouth policy of the Government.

Nothing of any very great moment has "transpired" in the Commons. The Government has introduced its Benefices Bill, which has passed its second reading. Perhaps the most noteworthy point in connexion with House of Commons procedure is the fatal ease with which money is voted. Only a week ago one vote of more than six millions went through without a word. On Friday last, a vote on Account of no less than £13,900,000 was passed by the help of the closure in one night! And, as if to add insult to injury, the *Times* actually complained that it was "discussed at great length!" This is by no means a healthy sign, and is but one of the enervating results of an unwieldy majority.

Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, March 3.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITIONS PRESENTED.

East India (Contagious Diseases).—Petitions against State regulation: From Saffron Walden (two), and Harborne and Edgbaston. To lie upon the Table.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

On the motion of Sir H. H. Fowler a "Return was granted showing the Net Income and Expenditure of British India, under certain specified heads, for the eleven years from 1886-7 to 1896-7."

THE DETENTION OF THE NATU BROTHERS. ADMITTED ABSENCE OF EVIDENCE.

With reference to the questions reported in our issue of last week, the following supplementary questions were asked:—

Mr. MacNeill asked if the Natus had been told what charge was made against them by the Government.

Lord G. Hamilton: They have been informed of the reasons of their arrest in the terms of the regulation.

Mr. W. Redmond: May I ask the noble lord whether there is any intention of bringing these men to trial at all?

Lord G. Hamilton: No, Sir; if there were evidence to justify their being put on a criminal charge, recourse would not have been had to this Act.

THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE IN INDIA.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India, whether, up to the year 1896, members of the Educational Service in India, without distinction of race, had the opportunity of rising by merit to the highest positions in the service, and did in fact rise to those positions:

Whether, in consequence of changes introduced in 1896, Indians were now in actual practice debarred from promotion to certain higher posts, which were exclusively reserved for persons appointed in England by the Secretary of State:

And, whether he would place upon the table the new rule by which this disability was created.

Lord G. HAMILTON: My answer to the first of the three divisions of the hon. member's question is in the affirmative. To the second, my answer is in the negative. The effect of the changes made in 1896 was (while preserving vested interests and prospects of promotion in the graded list) to transfer to the Provincial Educational Service certain higher appointments which had hitherto been filled by nomination in this country, thus practically reserving them for natives of India; while as regards such appointments to the Indian Educational Service as will be henceforward made by nomination in this country, there is nothing to prevent the selection of natives of India, and it was specially provided in 1896 that a native of India, if thus selected, should receive the same pay as an European, and not as before, two-thirds only; besides, having of course, the same chances of promotion. There is, therefore, no such new rule as the hon. member supposes.

THE VICTORIA CROSS.

With reference to the questions reported in our issue of last week, the following supplementary questions were asked:—

Mr. BROOKFIELD: Does the noble lord mean the House to understand that the Order of Merit referred to is regarded as a full equivalent to the Victoria Cross?

Lord G. HAMILTON: Yes, Sir; it is an equivalent so far as the Native army is concerned. It is, perhaps, given on a somewhat more liberal scale than the Victoria Cross, but it is an equivalent.

Mr. W. REDMOND asked if there was any general disposition amongst the soldiers of the Native army to become eligible for the Victoria Cross, and, if so, whether arrangements could be made whereby they might obtain it as well as white soldiers?

Lord G. HAMILTON: The existing arrangements, I think, are more favourable to the Native soldiers than if they were eligible for the Victoria Cross.

Mr. W. REDMOND: May I ask the noble lord to answer the questions put to him?

Lord G. HAMILTON: I cannot give any other answer than that which I have already given.

Mr. W. REDMOND: I beg to give notice that I will put several questions on this subject. (Laughter.)

RELIEFS SENT TO INDIA.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the Under-Secretary of State for War if he could state to the House what was the total number of reliefs sent to India during the last six months, and the number for the same period last year.

Mr. BRODRICK: The reliefs sent to India during the six months ending on March 3, 1897, were 14,510, and during the six months ending to-day 14,628 have been sent. There is this difference between the periods—that in 1897 all the reliefs had been despatched by March 3, whereas this year there remain 1,403 still to be sent.

Monday, March 7.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE WAR BEYOND THE FRONTIER.

LORD ROBERTS ON THE "FORWARD" POLICY.

SPEECHES BY LORD RIPON, LORD NORTHBROOK, AND LORD LANSDOWNE.

IMPORTANT DEBATE.

Lord ROBERTS of KANDAHAR, who was received with cheers, said: My lords,—The question of what is the best and wisest policy to adopt in regard to our relations with the tribes on the North-West frontier of India is one so bound up with our national interests, and of such supreme importance to our Empire in the East, and the well-being of our Indian fellow-subjects, that it ought not to be dealt with from the point of view of any one party in the State. (Hear, hear.) I hope, therefore, it will not be thought improper of me as a soldier to call attention to the papers on this subject recently presented to Parliament, or to take part in a discussion which must be of equal interest to all who have the honour and welfare of their country at heart, whatever may be their political views. (Hear, hear.) So great has been the divergence of opinion expressed on this question by men whose connexion with India gives them a claim to be listened to, it is no wonder that the public are puzzled with regard to it, and that statesmen should hesitate to commit themselves to any line of action until the subject has been thoroughly threshed out and the right course to pursue has been made clear to them and to the nation generally. This divergence of opinion, my lords, amongst so-called experts, which is apparently so unaccountable, is easily explained by the fact that those who oppose what has come to be known as the "forward policy" entirely ignore or treat as chimerical the reason which makes the carrying out of that policy essential if we are to retain our hold over India. The "forward policy"—in other words, the policy of endeavouring to extend our influence over, and establish law and order on that part of the border where anarchy, murder, and robbery up to the present time have reigned supreme—a policy, my lords, which has been attended with the happiest results in Baluchistan and the Gilghit frontier, and which is necessitated by the incontrovertible fact that a great European Power is now within striking distance of our Indian possessions, and in immediate contact with a State for the integrity of which we have made ourselves responsible. (Hear, hear.) Some 40 years ago, my lords, the policy of non-interference with the tribes so long as they did not trouble us may have been wise and prudent, although selfish and not altogether worthy of a great civilising Power. But, during that period, circumstances have completely changed, and what was wise and prudent then is most unwise and imprudent now. (Hear, hear.) At that time Russia's nearest outpost was 1,000 miles away; her presence in Asia was unheeded by, if not unknown to, the people of India; and we had no powerful reason for anxiety as to whether the 200,000 warriors on our border would fight for us or against us. To-day Russia is our near neighbour; her every movement is watched with the keenest interest from Peshawar to Cape Comorin; she is in a position to enter Afghanistan whenever it may seem to her convenient or desirable so to do; and the chance of her being able to attack us is discussed in every bazaar in India. We are bound in honour, my lords, bound by a solemn promise made 17 years ago, to protect Afghanistan, and between us and that nation are these 200,000 fighting men, who may either make the fulfilment of that promise easy or else most difficult, if not impossible; for, if we should have to subdue these 200,000 tried warriors before going to the assistance of Afghanistan, any Army we could put into the field would be used up before we could reach that country. Throughout the last Afghan war so persistently were we harassed by the tribesmen, that the greater number of the troops employed were occupied in keeping open the lines of communication. On the Peshawar-Kabul line alone between 11,000 and 12,000 men were required, and, as I told the Viceroy at the time, had there been anything like combination or organisation among the tribes, that number would have had to be doubled. The all-important question, therefore, that we have to consider is by what means can we insure that this enormous military strength may be used for us, and not against us. The opponents of the "forward policy" tell us that this can only be done by continuing the system, tried for nearly half-a-century, of letting the tribesmen alone, no matter what atrocities they commit, so long as they do not interfere with us, and, when their conduct necessitates punishment, recurring to the punitive expeditions which have already cost us such a heavy expenditure in blood and money, and inflicted such cruel misery on the innocent families of the delinquents. Burning houses and destroying crops, necessary and justifiable as such measures may be, unless followed up by some form of authority or jurisdiction, mean starvation for many of the women and children of the enemy, and for us a rich harvest of hatred and revenge, and more daring acts of outrage, so soon as the tribesmen recover from their temporary check. (Hear, hear.) The advocates of the "forward policy," on the other hand, contend that the system they recommend, and which has also been tried, but with far different results, on our southern and northern frontiers, is the only one which will enable us to gain the confidence and secure the allegiance of the wild and lawless, but brave and manly, inhabitants of the central section of the border, who have so clearly proved, by the part they have taken in the late disturbances, the absolute failure of the policy of non-interference. For, my lords, so perfectly was the policy of non-interference tried with the border-men, especially with the Afridis, that their country was, until the other day, a *terra incognita* to us; and so anxious were we to avoid giving them the slightest cause for suspicion that we wished to interfere with their independence, that the political officer in the Khyber, who commanded the Khyber Rifles and was responsible for the pass being kept open, was strictly prohibited from going to the right or left of the narrow road which leads through the pass; and the only British officer who ever ventured to enter Afridiland before Sir William Lockhart's force went there was punished by being removed from his appointment. We gave the Afridis large sums for permitting kafilas to go backwards and forwards once a week through the Khyber Pass for trading purposes, and we paid them an annual subsidy for allowing us to make use of the shortest route between Peshawar and Kohat, which runs through a corner of their land, and which they closed against us whenever it pleased them to do so, greatly to our inconvenience and annoyance. Is it possible for non-interference to be carried further? The recent very serious rising, which is still not altogether suppressed, as well as most of the frontier troubles with which we have had to contend of late years, have not been caused, as is so frequently stated, by the "forward policy," but by that policy not having been pushed far enough; by our refusing to recognise the responsibilities of our position with regard to India and Afghanistan; and by the half-hearted manner in which we have carried on our dealings with the tribesmen. Not, in fact, by what we have done, but by what we have left undone. The "forward policy" must, in my opinion, be gradually and judiciously but steadily pursued until we obtain political control over the robber-haunted no-man's-land which lies on our immediate frontier, where every man's dwelling is a miniature fortress, fortified against his neighbour, and must be continued until our influence is felt up to the boundary of our ally, the ruler of Afghanistan. When the responsibility for the defence of the North-West Frontier devolved upon me as Commander-in-Chief in India, I never contemplated any defence being possible along the frontier, as marked on our maps by a thin red line—the haphazard frontier inherited by us from the Sikhs—which did well enough so long as we had only to guard against tribal depredations. A frontier, more than 1,000 miles in length, with a belt of huge mountains in its front, inhabited by thousands of warlike men over whom neither we nor any other Power had control, and with a wide, impassable river in its rear, seemed to me then, as it does now, an impossible frontier, and one upon which no scheme for the defence of India could be safely based. For that defence it is evident that we must have the command of the most important of the roads which run through those mountains, and, to use a favourite expression of the great Duke of Wellington's, "We must be able to see the other side of the hill"; for, unless we know for certain what is going on there, and are in a position to block the passes, it will be impossible to prevent an enemy from making use of them, and debouching on the plains of India when and where he pleases. So satisfied was I as to the weakness and unfitness of our present frontier, that I pointed out to the Government, of which I had the honour to be a member, that money would be thrown away on fortifications and entrenched positions along such a line, and that, after securing the safety of the two most advanced arsenals (Quetta and Rawalpindi), we should devote ourselves to improving and extending our frontier roads, and, so far as financial considerations would permit, our railway communications, to enable the field army to advance whenever a further move-

ment might be necessary. I never ceased, at the same time, to reiterate that roads and railways could not be made through a hostile country, and that we should do all in our power to enter into closer and more friendly relations with those tribes through whose lands the roads and railways would have to run. This course, my lords, will assuredly be forced upon us whether we like it or not, in the interests of civilisation and by circumstances over which we have very little control. It is a great satisfaction, therefore, to know that wherever it has been thoroughly carried out it has proved eminently successful. (Hear, hear.) In support of this statement I would invite your lordships' attention to the fact that, throughout the present unusual frontier excitement, not a shot has been fired in that part of Baluchistan which is under our control, or in Chitral, where British officers have been in direct communication with the tribes, and where our boundary is practically conterminous with Afghanistan. (Hear, hear.) And, as your lordships will doubtless remember, when disturbances broke out in Chitral in the beginning of 1895, the very men who had most strenuously opposed us in Hunza Nagar, three years before, actually volunteered to serve under our officers, whom they had learned to know and to trust, and a body of levies drawn from those robber hordes did excellent service on that occasion. (Hear, hear.) I trust, my lords, you will not be persuaded to believe that the tribesmen would fight for us if left to themselves. Why should they? They would have nothing to fear from us, and nothing to gain by siding with us, for we should have nothing to offer them in return, whilst they would be induced to fight against us by the prestige which an advancing force always carries with it, and by promises which would be freely given that they should be sharers in the plunder of the riches of India. (Hear, hear.) My lords, the question we are discussing is, believe me, of vital importance to our future in India—(cheers)—for the attitude, not only of the border tribes, but of the whole Afghan nation, will depend upon the character of our frontier policy. If we are able to convince them that we have the will and the power to protect them, and are determined to let no other nation interfere with them, we may confidently reckon upon their throwing in their lot with us. But this desirable result can only be brought about by extending our influence over the tribes in the centre of our frontier, as it has been extended over the people of Chitral and Baluchistan, and by letting the Afghans see that we are prepared to go to their assistance should occasion arise. I would point out that the "forward policy" has not been simply a military subjugation; for, although at times force has had to be resorted to to bring the tribesmen to order, the conquest on the north and south has been largely a peaceful conquest. If anyone doubts this statement, I would ask him to read the life of Sir Robert Sandeman, one of the greatest frontier administrators—the very embodiment of the "forward policy." With very little fighting, Baluchistan, an immense tract of mountain and desert country, and inhabited by clans as wild and unruly as any on our frontier, was rescued by that practical border officer from a condition of absolute chaos, and turned into what is now a peaceful and prosperous province, where our officers move about freely escorted by the tribesmen themselves, and are everywhere met by signs of confidence and respect. (Hear, hear.) Sir Robert Sandeman used to describe his policy as one of "peace and good will," and that it certainly was. In 1885, Sir Charles Aitchison, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, one of the great Lord Lawrence's most devoted followers, and who, as Foreign Secretary in India, had been a steady adherent of the policy of "masterly inactivity," wrote to the then Viceroy, the Earl of Dufferin, in the following words:—"Sandeman is doing noble work at Quetta. He knows personally all the heads of the tribes and all the leading men, and has great influence over them. The people are rapidly settling down and learning respect for law and order. I believe the change between Quetta now and Quetta five years ago is greater than between the India of to-day and the India as I knew it before the Mutiny, and that is saying a good deal. For this we have mainly to thank Robert Sandeman, whose personal influence is something marvellous. Cultivation is rapidly spreading on the Quetta plateau, and villages with foliage are springing up all round the cantonment. . . I cannot speak too highly of the work. It is noble pioneer work." (Hear, hear.) My lords, it is this same system of tribal management which has been so satisfactorily introduced on the Gilghit frontier, where law and order have taken the place of raids, brigandage, and the horrors of the slave trade. The occupation of Gilghit and Chitral, and the successful Hunza-Nagar expedition brought about this desirable change, by which numbers of unhappy people who had passed long years in slavery have been restored to their homes. (Hear, hear.) When the expense and loss of life involved in the Chitral expedition are dwelt upon, and we are urged to withdraw our troops, these facts should not be forgotten. Moreover, my lords, the evacuation of a country which has been the scene of warlike operations is not, as some people imagine, always an advantage to the inhabitants. When Dost Mahomed Khan was allowed to return to Kabul as Amir, he made short work of every one who had helped us during the first Afghan war. Yakoob Khan, in the few months he was ruler after the treaty of Gandamak, showed that he had every intention of following his grandfather's example, and all who assisted us in Afghanistan in 1879-80 have either been made away with or are obliged to live as exiles in our territory. In considering the question of what advantage we are to gain from the series of extremely difficult operations which have been so successfully carried out by the distinguished officer in charge — General Sir William Lockhart, an officer in whom the country may have every confidence—and by the loyal and brave soldiers (Native as well as British) serving under his command, we must bear in mind that our present frontier position is not due to any desire on the part of the rulers of India to acquire territory or subjugate races for our own aggrandisement. We have been constrained to press on, partly by the action of the tribesmen themselves, who have made it impossible for our fellow-subjects to live at peace with them as neighbours; partly by the advance of Russia; and partly at the special request of the Amir of Afghanistan, who, when we objected to his interfering with recalcitrant tribesmen, justly remarked that it would be impossible to maintain peace on his side of the border unless these men were brought under his or our control. So anxious were the Government of India not to be drawn on, that in some instances, positions taken up were abandoned, only to be of necessity reoccupied later on; and each successive Viceroy, Liberal and Conservative alike, has been compelled to move forward, whether he wished it or not. (Hear, hear.) When we left Kandahar in the early days of the Marquis of Ripon's Viceroyalty, it was intended to fall back to Jacobabad, if not to the Indus. But, with all the will in the world to follow this course, it was found impossible to do so, and we were obliged to remain at Quetta, because a further retrograde movement would have endangered the safety of Sind and the Lower Derajat. So nearly, however, was the retirement to Jacobabad carried into effect that the railway which was being laid through the Bolan Pass was taken up and the material sent to Bombay, only to be brought back again and relaid at considerable additional expense before the noble marquis left India. (Cheers.) This measure had only just been determined upon when the aggressive action of Russia on the northern boundary of Afghanistan necessitated the railway being extended to Chaman, and sufficient material stored there to carry it on to Kandahar if occasion should require. It was much the same with Kuram. There was such anxiety to give up what we had gained that, after I had, under instructions from the Government of India, and in accordance with the earnest solicitations of the people, promised that, in return for the help they had afforded us, we would never desert them, but would continue to preserve them from the hated Afghan rule, we abandoned them to their fate—only to be obliged to return a few years later. (Hear, hear.) We have heard, my lords, a good deal of righteous indignation expressed lately at a supposed breach of faith on the part of the Government of India in making a road, with the consent of the people, to Chitral; but was there ever such a breach of faith as that abandonment of Kuram, and the desertion of a people who had done us good service after our solemn promise to stand by them? And is it not strange that that breach of faith has never aroused the least indignation or been denounced by anyone except by the unfortunate people of Kuram themselves? At first they refused to believe that we really meant to act towards them in such a faithless manner, and implored us to remain and befriend them. But when the time for our departure arrived and the general officer commanding had to read the proclamation intimating to them that our troops were to be withdrawn, the graybeards stood up in the durbar and upbraided the Government in no measured terms. Their words were:—"We welcomed you as friends when you first arrived amongst us and relieved us from the tyrannical Afghan Government. We freely met your demands for supplies, raised levies for the escort of your convoys, and assisted you in your operations. We identified ourselves with you, and we have made enemies outside our territories thereby. Now, on your leaving us, all peace and security will be gone, internal feuds will again be revived. We cannot govern ourselves, as there are two parties amongst us, one of whom is certain to call in the Afghans. We believed that we were to remain under your Government." After we left anarchy again reigned supreme, and the people of Kuram entreated us to return and take them under our rule. At length, in 1892-93, we were forced to send troops into the valley to restore order, and we reassumed political control. Peace and security once more prevail, and the Turi Militia under British officers are now doing us loyal service. (Hear, hear.) Our relations with the Gilghit frontier exemplify in even a more remarkable manner the impossibility of our being able to keep aloof from the strategical points on the natural boundary of our great Indian Empire. As far back as 1873, Lord Northbrook, the then Viceroy, considered it necessary to establish a British officer at Gilghit for the purpose of watching British interests on a frontier to which the Russians had advanced. Lord Lytton continued his predecessor's policy, and shortly before the Afghan war he deemed it advisable to depute the Resident at Gilghit to proceed as far as Chitral; but at the close of the war this officer was withdrawn and the whole of that frontier was left in the charge of the Kashmir authorities. It was, however, found impossible to continue this course, and in 1885, when there seemed every probability of a war between Russia and Afghanistan, the Earl of Dufferin, finding it necessary to have more complete information regarding the Gilghit frontier, despatched a mission under Colonel, now General Sir William Lockhart, to examine and report on the several passes, and to enter into definite relations with the ruler of Chitral, over which State, in consequence of its proximity to the Hindu Kush range, the Viceroy considered it essential to exert our influence. The same policy was followed by Lord Dufferin's successor, the Marquis of Lansdowne, and by the present Viceroy, the Earl of Elgin, warmly supported by the members of their respective Councils. Thus, my lords, we see that, during the last 25 years, five out of six Viceroys, beginning with Lord Northbrook, whatever their political opinions, were unanimous as to the wisdom of our having control over the Gilghit frontier, and that four of them found it necessary to extend that control to Chitral. It is difficult, therefore, to understand how, in the face of such a consensus of opinion on the part of those who have the best means of judging, people, comparatively ignorant of the subject, should think themselves entitled to raise such an outcry as we have recently heard against our remaining on the Chitral frontier. (Cheers.) For myself, I will only say that, in my opinion, it is imperative for us to occupy that northernmost corner of the great natural frontier of India; for, although I consider the chance of a successful attack upon India from that direction as infinitesimal—("Hear, hear," from the Opposition)—the danger of allowing even 2,000 or 3,000 Cossacks to cross either the Kilik, Dorah, or Baroghil Pass would be great, for the report of their presence in Chitral would cause a vast amount of excitement and alarm in Kashmir and the Punjab, and would have a most disturbing effect on the restless and warlike races along the border. (Hear, hear.) It is sometimes urged, my lords, as a reason against our endeavouring to get control over the inhabitants in the central part of the frontier, that they are more difficult to deal with than the people of Baluchistan. Baluchis, no doubt, are less fanatical than Pathans,

but they are just as warlike and were just as much given to pillaging and murdering as their more northern neighbours. Moreover, a great number of the inhabitants of Baluchistan are Pathans, while in Gilgit and Chitral the characteristics of the people are infinitely more Pathan than Baluch. The truth is, my lords, that Pathans (robbers and murderers though they may be, because they know no better) are fine, gallant fellows, and, like Orientals everywhere, are responsive to vigorous and sympathetic treatment, as we know from our experience of those of them who have served in our ranks. (Hear, hear.) If our present operations are followed up by an administrator of the Sandeman stamp being placed in political charge of the frontier tribes, by the occupation of some commanding position in Afridiland which will insure our having the control of the Khyber Pass and will form a much-needed sanatorium for the fever-stricken garrisons in the Peshawar Valley, by giving the tribesmen employment on such roads and railways as may be needed for our requirements, and if we make our influence felt in establishing law and order without interfering with their habits, customs, or religion, the Afridis and, in time, the rest of the border tribes will settle down and become not only peaceful neighbours but as brave and loyal soldiers in our service as the Sikhs, Gurkhas, and other warlike races who have fought against us have proved themselves to be. (Cheers.) It is impossible to doubt this, my lords, when we call to mind the recent splendid behaviour of the Khyber Rifles, who, even after having been deprived in a most incomprehensible manner of the support of their British officer at the time when that support was most needed, defended Lundi Kotal against their own kith and kin until overcome by numbers, when they retired to Jamrud, and have since been fighting alongside our regular troops. (Hear, hear.) If, my lords, you will bear with me a little longer—(cheers)—while I refer in a few words to the position which Russia now occupies in Asia, I trust I shall be able to explain to your satisfaction why I differ from those who think that we can afford to disregard Russia's advance and believe that physical difficulties and want of supplies and transport would prevent her from again bringing about complications in Afghanistan which would necessitate our once more entering that country. My lords, when we recollect the enormous physical difficulties that the energy, perseverance, and intrepidity of her soldiers have enabled Russia to successfully overcome in gaining her present position, it is ridiculous to suppose that any obstacles that are now before her, in the comparatively short distance that separates her from Afghanistan, could deter her from making a further onward move if she wishes to do so. (Hear, hear.) Twice during the last 60 years Russia has compelled us to go to war with Afghanistan by sending her emissaries to Kabul. On the first occasion she could not possibly have backed up any diplomatic arrangements by force of arms, on account of the distance which separated her from Afghanistan; and on the second occasion, although she had approached considerably nearer, and had actually a column in readiness for the purpose of assisting the Amír, it would have been difficult for her to have collected an army of sufficient strength to oppose us, for the Caspian Sea route was not then opened, there were no railways in Turkistan, and troops would have had to march all the way round by Orenburg. Six years later (1885), when war between Russia and Afghanistan seemed probable, and we began to mobilize in India, in pursuance of our agreement with the present Amír, a Russian army could have reached Herat almost as quickly as we could have reached Kandahar. (Hear, hear.) Thirteen years have elapsed since then, during which time Russia's position in Asia has so immeasurably improved that she is at least as favourably situated as we are for a further move. My lords, there is no blame attaching to Russia for having gained the position she now occupies. I for one recognise the immense good effected by her having made herself mistress of the slave-dealing Khanates of Turkistan, and I see clearly that the same power which impelled us to move northwards from the Bay of Bengal to the Indus has impelled her to move southwards from Orenburg to the Oxus. Up to these points neither of us interfere directly with the other, but Russia is near enough now to make the people of India anxious as to her future movements, and to unsettle their minds, unless we show ourselves determined to stop any further advance. (Hear, hear.) It seems to me, therefore, absolutely necessary for us to set our frontier in order and to prepare for contingencies which any reasonable person must admit to be possible, if not probable. (Hear, hear.) My lords, I have been derided as a Russophobe and taunted with being disturbed by a phantom forward movement of Russia. Well, my lords, I do not object to the appellation of Russophobe, if Russophobe means one who is convinced that the forces of civilisation will compel Great Britain and Russia to eventually meet in Asia, and who is equally convinced that if Russia is ever allowed to cross the great Hindu Kush barrier and possess herself of Afghanistan and the borderland, an attack on India would be merely a matter of time. This barrier, my lords, Russia must never be allowed to cross. (Hear, hear.) I am no Russophobe in the sense of being fearful as to the result of a meeting of the forces of Great Britain and Russia; but, my lords, I love India—(hear, hear)—and in her interests and in the interests of the trade and commerce of our own country, I desire to make every effort to delay the meeting as long as possible, and to insure that when it does take place it shall be as far from our possessions and under circumstances as favourable to India as possible. (Hear, hear.) I lay the greatest stress, my lords, on our never permitting an enemy to set foot on Indian soil, for, although I thoroughly believe in the loyalty of the Native chiefs and of the varied and various races who inhabit the vast continent of Hindustan, it would be foolish to forget that they are not our own flesh and blood, and that their loyalty is the outcome of their belief in our invincibility and of their reliance on our power to defend them, and it would be unreasonable to expect them to keep their faith in us if ever we were to allow an invader to pass the great mountain range that separates India from Central Asia. If we are true to ourselves the people of India will be true to us. (Cheers.) There is one point of view from which I have not discussed this question, and that is the financial point of view; not because I do not recognise its immense importance, but because it has not seemed to me to be my business. I conceive it to be my duty, as one who has had peculiar opportunities of making himself acquainted with our positions on the North-West frontier of India, to lay before you as clearly as I am able to do the reasons for the policy I advocate, and which I believe to be the only policy that can insure the safety of India; and it is for you, my lords, and the nation to decide on the course to be followed. I can only venture to express my firm conviction that, whatever may be the cost of the measures I propose, the cost, to say nothing of the danger to the Empire, will be infinitely greater if we allow matters to drift until we are obliged, in order to resist aggression in Afghanistan, to hurriedly mobilise a sufficient force to subdue the hostile tribes through whose country we should have to pass before we could reach those strategical positions which it is essential we should be able to occupy without delay, if we do not intend to allow India—that brightest jewel in Great Britain's Crown—to pass out of our safe keeping. (Cheers.)

The Earl of Onslow.

The Earl of Onslow said he rose with some diffidence to make some remarks on the speech of the noble lord, because he had an unrivalled acquaintance with the theatre of operations on the North-West frontier, and because he was admitted to be the first military authority either in England or in India on the strategy we might have to adopt in the event of an invasion of India from the north-west. Three times expeditions had gone through these passes into Afghanistan which had brought but little advantage to the Empire, save only one which was brought to a successful conclusion by Lord Roberts himself. (Cheers.) If he understood the proposal of the noble lord rightly, it was that we ought to have political control over the robber-haunted no-man's-land between India and Afghanistan, that we should take up our boundary to be conterminous with that of the Amír of Afghanistan, that we should take control of all roads that lay between the two countries and construct railways up to the frontier of the Amír's territory. It would be most desirable that we should have roadways and railways up to the frontier, but he thought the noble lord would agree with him that that could be accomplished on one condition only: that we should first of all place the tribes through whose territory those roads and railways ran under subjection to the Government of India. He welcomed one feature of the noble lord's speech. There was no attempt to suggest that the military operations recently carried on were due to the action either of one political party in the State or another. The noble lord did not suggest by what means he would proceed to the subjugation of these independent tribes. No doubt it was a fascinating picture to draw that we should occupy the great plateau of the Tirah, which compared most favourably with the unhealthy situation of the valley of Peshawar; but although the Tirah commanded some of the passes, such as the Khyber, the Bolan, and the Kohat, it did not command the whole of our North-West frontier. So even if we were to take the suggestion of the noble lord and establish a sanatorium in the Tirah, we should still have a large extent of frontier with which we would have to deal otherwise. The noble lord said it was no part of his duty to call attention to the financial considerations involved. He (Lord Onslow) very much regretted that the noble lord did not give some opinion on that subject—(hear, hear)—because it was a consideration of the utmost importance, more particularly in the present and very special condition of the finances of India. We had something like 50,000 men on the frontier at this moment engaged in the present operations. The cost of that was estimated at the lowest at some four crores of rupees. What would be the cost of permanently maintaining in the Tirah a force sufficient to keep under control the warlike nations which inhabited that district? (Hear, hear.) Would it not be necessary permanently to increase the Army stationed in India, and did the noble lord think that this could be accomplished at once or in a short time, or whether the force stationed there would not be exposed for a long time to come to very much the same sort of guerilla warfare as had harassed recent expeditions? (Hear, hear.) How was that large sum of money necessary to be obtained? By additional taxation of the people of India? Would it not be necessary to divert some of the funds set apart annually to redeem the debt against the possibility of an outbreak of famine, such as that of last year, and would the Government not have to curtail the railway projects which had done so much for the prosperity of India in the past? The noble lord said that if we were to establish relations with the Pathans similar to those established by Sir Robert Sandeman with the Baluchis we should have no more trouble. But be (Lord Onslow) thought the character of the Beluchis and that of the Pathans essentially different. (Hear, hear.) In dealing with the Baluchis they found a headman, and once they got his consent to any proposal they might rely on the consent of the whole tribe; but the headman of the Pathans had by no means the full control of the tribes. He believed they enjoyed party government, and that in no country, not even in France, were such rapid changes made among those who administered the affairs of the country. (Hear, hear.) When the noble lord said that we ought to endeavour to cultivate more friendly relations with the tribes on our frontier, that was a very different thing altogether from his first proposal that we should occupy their territory and take political control of them. (Hear, hear.) There was much to indicate their confidence in our declarations that we would leave them in the full occupation of their country, and that we had no desire to interfere with their tribal customs. It had been distinctly laid down that the policy of her Majesty's Government was to avoid any extension of administrative control over tribal territory; but that the Government at the same time recognised the necessity of the absolute fulfilment of those responsibilities which they had already incurred. He believed that in the history of every country there had been many instances in which brave and hardy hillmen had maintained their independence for a considerable period, but ultimately such mountaineers had been compelled to accept the civilisation which had been brought to their doors. He did not think that anyone would predict any other result for the opposition of the brave but barborous tribes on the North-West frontier of India. The question whether it should

be accelerated lay very much in the hands of the Government of India and of this country. He understood that the noble lord would hasten its accomplishment, but the moment was not opportune for hurrying it on, and he doubted whether the sacrifice of lives and treasure which would be involved would be commensurate with the objects the noble lord sought to accomplish. He would not follow the noble lord into the question of the rapid advance of Russia towards the frontier of India, but it seemed to him that at the present moment Russia was hanging on to other borders of the Empire than those of Afghanistan and India. Her objects in the Far East appeared to occupy her principal attention, and therefore the adoption of the forward policy did not seem to be called for at the present time. He would rather say let matters remain in their present condition, and let us cultivate friendly relations with the frontier tribes. It was known also that our declaration that we should avenge any attempt at an inroad upon our territory had been carried out, but that accomplished, we would return to the solemn declarations we had made, that we had no wish to extend our boundaries, and that we had no other desire than to cultivate the friendship and goodwill of our neighbours on the North-West frontier of our Indian Empire. (Cheers.)

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK.

The Earl of NORTHBROOK thought it highly desirable that in their lordships' House, which contained so many members who had held distinguished positions in India—he saw around him no fewer than four noble lords who had filled the office of Viceroy, besides others who had been Governors-General of the Presidencies—there should be some discussion upon the question raised by the noble and gallant lord. He entirely agreed that such discussion ought to be carried on without any regard to party politics. It seemed to him it was a matter of very little consequence who happened to be Viceroy or Secretary of State when such and such a measure was taken. What was necessary was to consider calmly what were the probable reasons for this outbreak, and what should be the future policy in dealing with the frontier tribes so as to avoid so serious a display of force as we had had to make on the present occasion. At no time in the history of India had we had so large a force under one command as had been engaged in this miserable war. The financial results of the war must be most serious to India, and what was quite as important, while the war had been carried on it was almost impossible for those responsible for the administration to pay that attention to home affairs which was so necessary in the present condition of India. He was not quite in accord with the views of the noble and gallant lord as to the true policy of dealing with the tribes. At the time of the annexation of the Punjab we had, fortunately, some of the finest administrators and soldiers that ever adorned our rule in India. Their administration was most successful. We organised a force a good deal composed of men belonging to the tribes themselves for the purpose of repressing any raids upon our territory. So successful was our administration that after ten years' occupation, at the time of the Mutiny, this country, instead of being a cause of danger, was a source of safety to us, and Nicholson and others brought down from the Punjab forces which materially assisted in the capture of Delhi, consisting, curiously enough, of Sikhs and Afridis, both bound to support the British Government. The noble and gallant lord said that the Punjab system of dealing with the tribes had failed, and he wished to substitute another. He thought that assertion had been completely disposed of in some very able articles recently published in the *Times*, giving a full account of the system which was carried on in the Punjab. It was said by some that there were 28 punitive expeditions in the first 30 years of our occupation of the Punjab. The result, however, of an examination was to show that in the first ten years there were 19 punitive expeditions, in the second ten years five, in the third only four, and during the time he had the honour of filling the office of Viceroy, and in the time of his predecessor, Lord Mayo, there was only one. Since the war with Afghanistan there had been only two such expeditions, and therefore he asserted, without the slightest fear of contradiction, that the Punjab system of dealing with the tribes had been perfectly successful in this—namely, that on the whole these raids by the tribes had ceased to any serious extent. The noble lord desired to substitute for the Punjab system, the system which he described as that pursued by Sir Robert Sandeman, in Baluchistan. The noble and gallant lord considered that the fact that Sir R. Sandeman was successful in Baluchistan proved that his system could readily be applied to the Pathan tribes. He ventured to differ, and, indeed, did not think it fair to quote Sir R. Sandeman as an officer, who, if he had had his own way, would have been in favour of applying his system in the manner which had been adopted in this case. A very interesting book had been recently published—the "Life of Sir Robert Sandeman"—and at the end of that book there were some memoranda by himself, and in one of these, dated December, 1890, he said:—"Were it not for military considerations affecting the defence of India against Russia, I would be an advocate of masterly inactivity instead of conciliatory intervention, and I should consider it a mistake to make any attempt to include, under our control, the independent tribes which lie between ourselves and Afghanistan proper." He would briefly explain what happened when the Sandeman system was applied in 1889. Sir R. Sandeman marched a force through the country, between Baluchistan and the Afridi country. He found some of the headmen who said they would like us to occupy it. He made arrangements with them for the protection of certain roads going into Afghanistan, and returned to the scene of his own administration in Baluchistan. In 1890, the very next year, it was necessary to send a large force into that country to carry out his arrangement. It consisted of two or three separate bodies of troops who marched all through the country to show our strength, and one section of the tribes, with whom Sir R. Sandeman desired to deal, having refused to be dealt with, was coerced and their country invaded, and they were bound to submit. The officer commanding that expedition thought it would be a useful thing if a very high mountain in that country called the "Throne of Solomon" were ascended in order that any mystery connected with that mountain might be removed. The consequence was troops were sent up the mountain to make a survey. He could conceive nothing more likely to arouse suspicion among the tribes and their neighbours than to see our officers on the top of all their hills surveying and making maps of their country which had, up to that time, been regarded as independent. He did not think the officer who went up the Throne of Solomon was to be credited with the wisdom of Solomon in accomplishing that operation. Noble lords would be surprised to hear that the result of that expedition, which was to protect Afghanistan against Russian invasion, so far from pleasing the Amír, created great suspicion in his mind. Some of his officers went to that country over which he considered he had some rights, and that was one of the reasons why it was necessary to send Sir Mortimer Durand to meet the Amír and arrange the different spheres of influence in Afghanistan and British India. That was the result of the first attempt to extend the Sandeman system of administration into this country. In the winter of the same year a survey was made for a railway through the country, and shortly afterwards it was annexed to Baluchistan, or in other words, the British Empire. He heard with great satisfaction the views expressed by Lord Kimberley on the Durand agreement, for he spoke on that subject with greater authority than any other man, having been, as Secretary of State, mainly responsible for the agreement. The Durand agreement laid down a line of frontier between the Amír and ourselves. In order to mark out that line a brigade of troops was marched into the independent territory of these tribes, and he did not see in the papers that their consent was asked. The effect was very disastrous, because the tribes, irritated by the advance of the troops, fired into our camp at night, and an expedition of 9,000 men had to be sent into the country and posts were established between one place and another through Waziristan. When these posts were established the tribes began to break out again. Fines had to be imposed. Mr. Gee, who was sent to collect them, was treacherously attacked by the tribes. There was only one matter of satisfaction connected with that expedition—the extraordinary gallantry of the Native officers, who had to lead the troops back to the nearest support. This was the second attempt to carry out the policy of introducing the Sandeman system among the Kuram tribes. Lord Roberts had expressed his surprise at the evacuation of the Kuram, but, writing in an important document after the campaign in which he so greatly distinguished himself, he said, "I strongly advocate the complete withdrawal of troops from the Kuram," and he strongly protested against the tribes being placed under the Amir of Afghanistan. Besides the advances of which he had spoken, there were other advances of the same description in other parts of the tribal territory. Forts were placed on the Samana Hills. This was part of the Sandeman policy. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab protested against the manner in which the Waziristan expedition took place. He explained the difference between the Baluchis and Pathans, and said there were always found amongst the latter tribes a certain number of men who were willing to accept the English rupee and who were only too glad if the English would come and occupy some part of their country. It was soon found, however, that these men did not carry the other tribesmen with them. An expedition was sent some time ago to the west of Peshawar and he was greatly shocked when he read of it, because it appeared to him that the expedition was sent to the Black Mountains simply for the purpose of creating a quarrel with the tribes in order that we might be able to send a further expedition. The instruction given to the officer in command was that if he were opposed he should go back. The result was that next year a larger force was sent into the country. That was only another of those expeditions that had taken place in the last eight, nine, or ten years, which were not punitive expeditions, but expeditions intended to carry out the "forward policy." When he came to examine the causes of the recent operations, he was irresistibly forced to the conclusion that, although doubtless there was a great wave of fanaticism amongst all the tribes, he could not believe that unless there had been these constant encroachments in their neighbourhood, and unless they had had a reasonable suspicion that we were going to encroach upon their independence, there would not have been that combination amongst the tribes against us which we had lately seen and which had caused this serious war on the frontier. When making these remarks he made no accusation against anyone. He was satisfied that our officers, from the highest to the lowest, had endeavoured to do their duty to the best of their ability, but he thought they had adopted a mistaken policy. As to the future policy to be pursued in regard to the tribes, he was happy to tender his cordial support to her Majesty's Government, judging of their policy, as he did, from the recent despatches. The moderation of the terms imposed upon the tribes was very greatly to be commended. There was to be no acquisition of territory, and we were not to do what the noble and gallant lord recommended—namely, keep the centre of Afridiland in any permanent manner. No tribute was to be imposed upon the tribes, the question of posts was to be reconsidered, and it was not intended to occupy the Khyber Pass by British troops. He thought, however, especially after the speech of the noble and gallant lord, that something more required to be done. Not one of their lordships could have listened to the speech of Lord Roberts without feeling with him that it was our duty to carry out our engagement with the Amír of Afghanistan, and if necessary, to protect his country against any attack. The assurance given by Lord Ripon in 1880 was almost identical with that which he (Lord Northbrook) had had to give in 1873. The only question to be discussed was, What was the best way to enable us to carry out that assurance? This was a matter of the gravest importance, on which the noble and gallant lord spoke with very high authority. But other gallant officers, whose opinions must be considered as of equal value, did not agree with the views of the noble and gallant lord. Sir Donald Stewart, Sir Henry Norman, Sir John Adye, and others differed from those views; so that it was not the general opinion of the military experts that the best way of carrying out our engagement with the Amír was the way advocated by Lord Roberts—namely, the occupation of the Kabul-Kandahar line and the control of all the

passes between Afghanistan and India. An opinion expressed by a most distinguished authority in 1881 was not the same as that now expressed by the noble and gallant lord. That authority declared that the position at Kandahar, on the flank of any possible advance by Russia, was the essential position; that it would not be wise to distribute our forces; and that we should remain simply on the defensive on the North-West frontier. Possibly circumstances had changed since then; but he doubted whether they had changed sufficiently to affect the main principle of strategy then laid down. Our energies were to be mainly devoted to striking vigorously on the Kandahar side; as we had neither sufficient men or material to warrant our defending on more than one line. This high military authority also said, "It may not be very flattering to our *amour propre*, but I am sure I am right in saying that the less the Afghans see of us the less they will dislike us." The distinguished officer who said all that was Sir Frederick Roberts, just after he had come back from Kandahar. After the speech of the noble and gallant lord, and the statements which had been made over and over again as to the military and strategic considerations which ought to govern all our dealings with the frontier tribes, the question should not be allowed to stand as it did now. It should be thoroughly threshed out, first by the distinguished military authorities and then by the statesmen, for the question was political as well as military. Regard must be had to the number of our troops; and the possible effect of any measures such as those recommended by the noble and gallant lord on the recruiting for our army in India; and the financial power of India to meet the admitted expense of such a policy, for all the advanced points would have to be connected by railway. Then it was also necessary to consider what was the opinion of the Amir of Afghanistan of this policy. Did he wish to see roads and railways made in his country.

Lord Roberts of Kandahar: I never proposed to make roads in Afghanistan. My proposal was to take the roads and railways up to our frontier.

The Earl of Northbrook said that he thought he had seen a map, which came out of the noble lord's office in India, on which the future strategic railways for the defence of India were laid down, and that those railways were marked at several points in Afghanistan. The plans of the noble lord involved railways through Afghanistan. Did the noble lord suppose that the Amir would like that kind of defence? Up to now the Amir had opposed the making of communications through his country; and he was of opinion that in the circumstances he was right. The Amir had behaved loyally to us in this matter of the frontier tribes; he had done his best to discourage them, and had sent them back over and over again from his capital; and the view which he took of the plans for the defence of his country ought not to be lost sight of. (Hear, hear.) He could not for a moment admit that he had not the same interest in the defence of India as the noble and gallant lord. They must both feel that India must be defended at all costs. The only question was, how was it to be done? It was necessary in the public interests that the question should be discussed and decided by military men and statesmen, that her Majesty's Government should make up their minds, and that the whole of the papers and arguments on both sides should be laid before Parliament. It was most unfortunate that the opinion of so distinguished an officer as the noble and gallant lord should first come to the knowledge of the people from a speech in the House of Lords. Surely the noble lord must have put his views on record while he was in India? These matters should not be kept back from the public; and her Majesty's Government should present besides the Blue-books—in which there was not one single word touching on the great strategic views of the noble lord—the opinions of the experts, so that the public might know what the arguments were. There was no reason why this should not be done. In 1881 papers were freely given to the public. There could be nothing new to disclose to the Government of Russia. We did not complain of her advance; and we had no fear of the result, if Russia chose to attack us. He could see no possible disadvantage to the public interest if the whole of these matters were thoroughly discussed and laid before Parliament. He did not look with satisfaction on the position of Parliament in respect to these events in India. He had only one other observation to make, and that was that, in his judgment, the condition of Parliamentary control in these matters was not altogether satisfactory. Under the Act of 1858, whenever it was considered necessary to move troops outside Indian territory, that could not be done without an address from both Houses of Parliament, but it had never been considered necessary in these frontier expeditions to take that course; at the same time, here were 70,000 men employed on the frontier of India without any application having been made to Parliament. He did not think that was right. He thought, moreover, that some check should be put on the annexation of territory taking place without the knowledge of Parliament, and he did not see why full consideration should not be given to all questions of annexation of territory. After the Mutiny the chiefs and people of India were solemnly assured by a proclamation by her Majesty that she did not desire any extension of her territories. But what was this policy? We had annexed a territory larger than Switzerland and the Tyrol put together, and previously there had been the annexation of Upper Burmah. All this had been done since that proclamation was issued. There might be, of course, interests which required the annexation of territory, but he thought that where it was necessary for any reason there should be some resolution of the Secretary of State in Council confirming the proposals of the Government of India for annexation which could be laid before Parliament. He believed that the policy which had been explained by the Secretary of State for India in his despatch of January 28 last was the right policy, and he hoped that the Government of India would soon be able to devote their attention to the more important questions which, in his opinion, affected the interests of her Majesty's subjects in that Empire. (Hear, hear.)

Lord Reay.

Lord Reay said that the noble and gallant lord had told them that circumstances had changed very much with regard to frontier policy in the past few years, but he had omitted to mention one of the most important changes, and that was the agreement with Russia by which the frontiers were delimited. Russia could only cross the frontier in distinct breach of that agreement, and it was not right to suspect a great Power of such a breach of agreement. As regarded the wider question of how Russia was to be met in the event of war, that was not merely an Indian matter, but one which should be considered by the Council of Defence, over which the noble duke opposite presided. The noble and gallant lord had stated that the late Government were guided in their policy with regard to Chitral by comparatively ignorant people. He could assure the noble and gallant lord that the late Government consulted not comparatively ignorant people, but the best experts, both military and civil. Everything that had happened since that decision was taken, confirmed those who were responsible for that policy in the opinion that it was the wisest step to take. (Hear, hear.) He was one of those who believed that the position in India mainly depended on the question of finance. The situation in which the local governments now found themselves, with no money to spend on roads, railways, or other works, was one which ought to be speedily put an end to in the highest interests, not only of India itself, but of the trade which we did with it. He could assure the noble earl, the Under-Secretary for India, that, if the Government carried out the policy he had enunciated, they could rely on the cordial support of himself and his colleagues in the late Government.

The Marquis of Lansdowne.

The Marquis of Lansdowne: I cannot help thinking that those of us who listened to the remarkable speech of my noble and gallant friend on the cross benches must have felt that, whether they agreed with him or not, he, at least, laid before this House an account of the so-called forward policy, differing very widely indeed from some of the very grotesque caricatures of that policy, which have been presented to the public in the Press and on the platform during the last few months. (Hear, hear.) We have been constantly told that the Government of India had been captured by a little clique of military gentlemen, inspired with a desire for wild schemes of annexation, and inspired, above all things, by a thirst for medals and decorations wherewith to decorate their manly breasts (laughter); and that the councils of these gentlemen have resulted in military operations, thoughtlessly undertaken and calculated to impose on the finances of India a strain which they are quite unable to bear. At any rate, my noble and gallant friend did not recommend to the House what might be described as a scheme of wholesale and reckless subjugation of the tribes. I think my noble friend, the Under-Secretary, scarcely apprehended the meaning which my noble and gallant friend intended to convey to the House, because I did not understand my noble and gallant friend to declare that what is described as the "forward policy" should be applied in any but the most gradual and cautious manner. There was no suggestion of an immediate occupation of tribal territory, or of an immediate advance to the borders of Afghanistan. What I gathered that my noble and gallant friend advocated was very much what was advocated by the representative of the Government himself, who told the House that the result of the recent operations had been to dispel the illusion of the inaccessibility of these tribes, and, that result having been achieved, that he was in favour of establishing more friendly relations with them. That is the policy of the despatch, and that I venture to say must be the policy of any reasonable person who has ever considered these matters. Lord Northbrook has imputed to the noble and gallant lord a desire to apply the Sandeman policy indiscriminately throughout the whole frontier. Now Sir R. Sandeman himself admitted very frankly that no one policy was applicable to conditions so varied as those found at different points along the line of the Indian frontier. The noble earl referred to the Black Mountain operations. I do not know whether he referred to that expedition as an example of the inapplicability of the Sandeman policy. But how did that expedition come about? The tribes near the Black Mountain had for years rendered the condition of the neighbourhood intolerable; they raided into British territory, and it became necessary to send an expedition to keep them in order. Certain conditions were imposed, among them being the condition that they must get rid of a notorious ringleader who was at the bottom of all the troubles. They failed to fulfil the conditions and reverted to their lawless habits, and two other expeditions had to be sent in the next three or four years. That was not an example of Sir R Sandeman's method, but rather an illustration of the old-fashioned procedure of getting into tribal territory, punishing the tribes as severely as you could, and then coming away. I have protested against the exaggerated descriptions of the "forward policy" which have been placed before the public of late, and I think public opinion has been bewildered because people have been told that they must choose between this forward policy and the policy of Lord Lawrence. We all know that the policy of Lord Lawrence, excellent as it may have been in his time, is a policy that we have left very far behind indeed. I am not going to say which political party had the greater share in the abandonment of that policy. I do not, however, think it would be very difficult to show that the more numerous and the longer strides were taken by the party opposite. It is perfectly evident that the advance of Russia to the very gates of Persia and Afghanistan, our own advance far beyond the line of the Indus, and the engagements which we have entered into with the Amir of Afghanistan render it absolutely difficult to understand how the old policy of Lord Lawrence could be resorted to in the present day. Another thing which has further accentuated the difference between the present order of things and the old order is the conclusion of the Durand agreement. I know that it has been held that one result of the Durand agreement has been to create a feeling of unrest among the tribes, and there may be some truth in that assertion. But I am convinced that the Durand agreement was the greatest step taken for a long time in the direction of placing our relations with the tribes on the one side with the Amir on the other on a satisfactory footing.

During the years preceding that agreement we were engaged in one continuous series of recriminations and differences with the Amír, the burden of whose complaint was, "Tell where my boundary is and I will observe it." In the absence of any ascertained boundary between his sphere of influence and ours, the tribes were constantly playing off the Amír against us and the Government of India against the Amír, and the Amír, who no doubt cherished some dreamy vision of gradually recovering the great Afghan Kingdom of his predecessors, was perpetually intriguing with the tribes and encroaching upon our borders. My noble and gallant friend remembers that when he and I were in India together the Amír was encroaching among the tribes of the Kuram Valley, was occupying positions in the heart of the Waziri country, and had taken steps to occupy a place well within the Baluchistan borders. All that friction has now disappeared, and I have no doubt that it is mainly owing to the carrying out of the Durand agreement that the conduct of the Amír has been as correct as it has been during the recent troubles. (Hear, hear.) But the real question which we have to consider is the future management of these important tribes. We are concerned with them as our neighbours, neighbours who, I am afraid, do not always conduct themselves with the strictest propriety—(laughter)—and we are also concerned with them as the occupants of a great belt of tribal territory which, unless our system of military defence is to be altered, may possibly lie behind us should we be engaged in hostilities beyond the frontier. This tribal belt contains about 200,000 fighting men of very great bravery—(hear, hear)—and it does seem to me that we should spare no effort in order to render our relations with these tribes of a kind which shall give us some hope that their behaviour will be what we should desire in the event of our being engaged in serious hostilities on the frontier of India. (Hear, hear.) But we are also concerned with these tribes because in their territory we have a recruiting ground, which, in its fertility, may perhaps to some extent compensate for the exhaustion of other sources of supply. In this debate there are, I think, several points on which we have had a very near approach, at all events, to agreement. I think it is not denied that if the tribes commit outrages they must be punished. Nor, again, is it pretended that their external relations are not to be controlled by us. I heard a suggestion from the noble lord opposite that because we have concluded a boundary treaty with Russia it was less necessary for us than before to consider that point. But I do not think that our experience in other parts of the world suggests to us the idea that because we draw a line on the map you can afford to sit still behind that line and take no thought for events in the neighbourhood. Then there is the question of the passes. With regard to some of them there is not, I believe, any difference of opinion. That the Khyber is to be kept open has been admitted by all the noble lords who have discussed this question. Nor, I suppose, will it be disputed that the pass leading to Kandahar should be kept open. I should like to say a word as to the Gomal Pass. It was opened when I was in India without firing a shot, and it is not only the shortest but the easiest trade route between India and Afghanistan. The great caravans pass through it in large numbers, carrying with them the merchandise of Afghanistan to India, and returning to Afghanistan with piece goods, metals, and other commodities to be procured in India. I must say that, to allow a great trade route of that kind to be closed against us because of the bad practices of a mere handful of these tribesmen who have hitherto terrorised the neighbourhood of Gomal seems to me a confession of impotence utterly unworthy of a great Power. We are at this moment all over the world endeavouring to obtain facilities for trade, and why we should allow a few of these hillmen, against the will of their fellow-tribesmen, to close that pass in our faces I cannot conceive; and I am glad to think that that is the view which has found some favour with noble lords opposite. They will remember that the late Secretary of State acceded to the request of Lord Elgin's Government to place a military post at a point in the neighbourhood of Gomal, and did so in the teeth of a strong and energetic protest of three members of Lord Elgin's Council in an able, weighty, and reasoned document, which to my surprise the noble lord quoted just now as an explanation of the policy which he desired to follow. It was the policy which his own Secretary of State had declined to accept when placed before him in what was described as the "parting of the ways." The way which the Secretary of State chose was not the way indicated by the noble lord, but the way indicated by Lord Elgin and the other members of the Council who rightly insisted on the necessity of placing a post for the protection of the Gomal Pass. During those discussions we constantly heard that it is desirable to exercise an influence or a control of some kind over these tribesmen. I doubt whether a speech has been made or a despatch written in which that expression "influence" does not occur. I want to know what it is we mean when we talk of influencing these tribesmen. The word is perhaps a little wanting in precision, and we are more likely to arrive at its true meaning if we consider first what it does not mean. In the first place, when we talk of "influence," we do not mean the subjugation of the tribes or the annexation or administration of their territory. I am indeed inclined to think that we have extended our system of provincial administration too far even within the limits of our own tribal territory. These tribesmen are rough and lawless people, accustomed to patriarchal modes of life and rude forms of justice, in which personal authority counts for more than strict correctness of procedure, in which the substance of justice is more valued than the form in which it is administered. They are not grateful to you for bringing them under the operation of complicated codes of law, or for conferring on them the right of appeal from one court to another, ending in a suit before a High Court sitting many hundred miles away. And, if such procedure is distasteful to the tribes, its effect on our officers are not altogether good. It overwhelms them with technical work, leaving them little leisure for anything else, and it tends to make them too fond of formalities and of over-elaboration, and deficient in those qualities of promptitude and self-reliance which are indispensable in a frontier officer. I am, therefore, by no means in favour of bringing these tribesmen outside our limits within the scope of our administration. Another thing that "influence" does not mean is in my belief a policy of mere abstention. I do not think in private life you will influence your neighbours by pretending to be unaware of their presence; and if occasionally you vary the procedure by violently assaulting them you may perhaps arrive at some kind of influence, but it certainly would not mean what the noble lord called "friendly influence," which is what I understand he desires to obtain for the tribes. There is also this to be remembered. Much as you may desire to maintain an attitude of pure abstention, the facts will not allow you to do so. We sometimes see fancy pictures drawn of the frontier with the tribes on one side and ourselves on the other as if we had no concern with what passes on the other side of the border. We know that is not the case. Those tribes are as it were astride on the frontier. They frequent our territory; they move backwards and forwards between the plains of India and the hills; and it so comes to pass that neither their proximity nor their habits and character enable us, even if we desired to do so, to ignore their existence. The result is that there is forced upon us, not a policy of abstention, but a policy of abstention qualified by very severe police measures. Those who have watched the events on the frontier of India are familiar with the kind of vicious circle round which these events travel. You have months, perhaps years, of lawlessness and misconduct on the part of the tribes, the authorities keeping their blind eye to the telescope as long as they can. At last the outrages or the raids become too numerous. Then comes the fine, which is usually paid by the most respectable section of the tribe. If it remains unpaid you have a blockade, which means that the hard-working, laborious members of the community who have some lawful business to follow are prevented from following that business. Then comes the expedition. The troops go in, the villages of these wretched people are destroyed, and their crops are burned, their wives and children driven out on the hill-side, perhaps their fruit trees cut down—a punishment which seems to me to be a singularly ruthless one—and then the troops go away. As often as not a settlement of some kind is patched up with scarcely decent delay, and we are fortunate if we go away without a few shots being fired as the troops retire through the narrow valleys. We come away leaving behind us a legacy of hatred and contempt—hatred for the injury we have done, contempt because having gained an advantage we are apparently unable to maintain it. I ask your lordships whether that policy is one altogether dignified and worthy of a great Power, whether it is a humane policy worthy of a nation which is very often lecturing other countries for any acts of undue severity, whether it is an economical policy judged by the large sums which have been spent upon it during the last few years. I ask your lordships whether you would be surprised that there has grown up in India a school of public men who have, at any rate without harbouring any sinister designs on the independence of the tribes, desired to see something better, something more worthy of a great Power like ourselves adopted in the management of that country. I noticed the other day that the leader of the Opposition recommended his hearers to read an extremely interesting book which has lately been written by Mr. Thorburn. I should like to read to your lordships Mr. Thorburn's account of the way in which these things are done:—"As a rule such counter-raids—officially designated expeditions—cost us tens of thousands or lakhs of rupees, whilst inflicting comparatively insignificant loss on the offending tribe, and ended in our accepting a nominal fine, declaring bygones bygones, and taking hostages for good conduct; in other words, paying a few score starving highlanders several hundred rupees a month for idling in British territory for an indefinite time, under surveillance, in a comfortable serai or barrack. Thus our enemy, though officially beaten, in reality blackmailed us." And then he goes on:—"Such a way of making war produced no finality and entirely failed in its object. . . . . Every soldier in the force has known that the expedition had not been a success, because prosecuted on lines which insured failure." And then he goes on further; and this, remember, is the book recommended by the leader of the Opposition as a volume in which sound doctrines are to be discovered:—"To teach a hill tribe a lasting lesson a lasting loss must be inflicted—a big bag must be made, as in 1891-92 on the Samana, or a wholesale destruction of valuable property such as towers, houses, crops, stored grain, must be relentlessly effected. Failing either of those desiderata a slice of territory should be annexed or leading men or a famous family, or section of a clan, blotted out by deportation. *Delenda est Carthago*, the principle followed by Romans and Russians, is the cheapest and least bloody in the end if the work is to be thorough and enduring." I am not prepared to go nearly as far as Mr. Thorburn. (Opposition cheers.) I said distinctly that there were people in India, many men who were weary of a frontier policy of this kind, and who desired to substitute a different policy for it; and I can assure your lordships that if that feeling is entertained it is a feeling which is originated not with ambitious soldiers but with a great many of our best and most intelligent frontier officers and civilian officials, who are convinced that it is within our power to manage the tribes upon different principles. The policy laid down by Lord George Hamilton's despatch with which the Blue-book concludes is a policy of control over the tribes within our sphere of influence coupled with the minimum of interference with their domestic affairs. To talk of tribal independence is a little misleading. There can be no real independence in the case of a people that has not the power of transferring its allegiance in any direction it pleases. We know that power is not given to these frontier tribes, and I think therefore it is better perhaps not to speak of them as independent. That condition of qualified independence is a very common one all through the borders of India, not only on the western but also on the eastern side, on the borders of Burma and Siam. Small states and frontier tribes are not strong enough to stand alone. They know they must lean upon some stronger Power, and in the case of the tribes whom we are speaking of this evening, I take it it is our intention that they should lean upon us, and not upon any other Power. But if that policy is to have any success, I hold strongly that we must show the tribes that they have something to hope as well as something to fear from it. That, I take it, is the essence of the policy which is advocated by the

noble and gallant lord on the cross benches, and that is the policy which is indicated in the despatch, in which I find that even in the case of these Afridi tribes, the Government of India is instructed that it is, if possible, to enlist their goodwill and to secure their assistance in maintaining the road through the Khyber Pass. I think the noble and gallant lord will scarcely deny that in the matter of railways he was always a little bit ahead of the Government of India. And very naturally. He desired to see certain strategic lines made. We, on the contrary, know that a strategic line is a very expensive line to make, and that it brings little or no return, and we were consequently not always able to meet his views in this respect. Roads stand on a very different footing. That the main arterial roads are to be kept open is not denied. When we come to the secondary or subsidiary roads the case is less clear, but I do not think any money can be better applied on the frontier than that which is spent in encouraging the tribes themselves, of their own free will, to make and improve roads. A road is a great civiliser; it civilises the man who makes it and the man who travels along it. I believe that cautiously and judiciously pursued the policy of promoting the construction of roads is a perfectly sound one. With regard to posts, we desire to see as few military posts as possible, and these placed in the strongest and most carefully selected positions. I believe I am right in saying that the tendency in India of late has been to concentrate these posts. But that there must be some posts to guard these roads is inevitable, and it is idle to imagine that you can secure the safety of these roads without keeping a certain number of tribes in their neighbourhood. There is one other point on which I am in entire agreement with the noble and gallant lord. I attach the utmost importance to the selection of frontier officers by whom these tribal affairs are to be managed. An officer may be a most gallant and able administrator in an Indian province, but he may be altogether deficient in the special qualities which are required to manage these wild mountain tribes. If you select the right men for employment of this kind they will not entangle you in military expeditions; they will, on the contrary, avoid the necessity of anything of the kind. I am very glad to find that the noble earl admits that in the Baluchistan Agency the policy of Sir R. Sandeman was signally successful. It is, of course, a truism to say that the Baluchi and Pathan tribes differ very widely. The organisation of the tribes is different, the character of the men is different, but I believe there are some qualities which will be found in any tribesmen and some principles which, if judiciously applied, would operate successfully whether you were dealing with the northern or the southern sections of the frontier. I do not think that is a mere theory, because, if your lordships will consider what has been the condition of the Indian frontier while these operations have been lately in progress, I think you will be struck by the extreme difference between the conduct and demeanour of the tribesmen in those regions where the old stand-aloof policy is no longer applied, and those tribes, on the other hand, where we have still abstained from having any relations at all with the tribesmen. Following the frontier from north to south, your lordships will find that in those provinces where, within a very few years, severe struggles have taken place, and where the tribes were the greatest raiders, there has been scarcely any trouble. If, on the other hand, you turn to the territories where we treated the tribes with distant respectfulness, such as the Orakzais, on whose borders we had established posts but with whom we had never entered into any relations, in their case the struggle was bitter and prolonged, and the temper of the hill tribes most irreconcilable. To sum up, I would ask your lordships to dismiss from your mind the idea that the forward policy is what we have not infrequently been told, to dismiss also from your mind the idea that we have to choose between such a policy and a return to the policy of Lord Lawrence; I ask you to believe that it is possible to administer the frontier in a better manner than by reverting to the old system of inflicting severe punishment on the tribes and then withdrawing altogether from intercourse with them. We found ourselves on the assumption that whether a tribesman be a Baluchi or a Pathan he has a good deal of human nature in his composition. We also found ourselves on the belief that amongst the qualities which distinguish the race to which we belong stand out conspicuously those qualities of self-reliance, fearlessness, and, above all, a broad sympathy, which have enabled us all over the world to win over to ourselves men belonging to races less civilised than our own. (Cheers.)

The Marquis of Ripon.

The Marquis of Ripon: I have listened with great regret to the speech of the noble lord who has just sat down, because the situation is altogether changed by that speech, which is at variance with that of the Under-Secretary for India and also with what has been said by the Secretary for India himself. Lord G. Hamilton, in a telegram of October 13, spoke of limiting our interference with the tribes so as to avoid the extension of administrative control over independent tribal territories. I have heard with regret the noble marquis say that the word "independence" applied to the tribes was a mistake. But it is Lord G. Hamilton's expression, and one which ought to be applied to the tribes, because they do not occupy British territory, and unless you intend to annex them you are bound to recognise them as independent tribes. I regret the absence of the Prime Minister, because nothing could be clearer or more explicit than the declaration of Lord Salisbury on the first night of the Session on this matter, and I am sorry he is not here to mediate between the Secretary for War and the Under-Secretary for India. The noble marquis talked about the animadversions which had been indulged in on some platforms and in newspapers in regard to what is called the "forward" policy. The speech of Lord Roberts contained an exposition sufficiently startling, coming from him, of the whole of the forward policy. The real difficulty of this question lies here—Under-Secretaries of State for India and Viceroys may make wise declarations with respect to the policy they pursue, but there are persons in India and at home who desire to pursue a different policy, who are always pressing forward for ulterior ends, and who when the Government of India takes any step which is in their direction, use it only to go forward. That is the real difficulty and danger connected with this question. The policy which Lord Roberts has defended, and which he has called a new and forward policy, is not a new policy at all. It dates back to the first Afghan war. It is the policy which produced the first Afghan war and resulted in the failures and disasters of that war. It is the policy which produced the second Afghan war, with its expenditure and mischiefs, and I venture to think it is a policy which has had much to do with the recent outbreak, which has cost so many valuable lives, will cost us such a vast sum of money, and which has not proved itself to be a success. Lord Roberts told us that our troops were withdrawn from Kuram and we broke the pledges we had given to the people of that valley. I deny that *in toto*. Our troops were withdrawn on the recommendation of Lord Roberts himself. But we strictly adhered to our obligations to the people of Kuram. Our promises were definite, and nothing was ever done, when I was in office or afterwards, which was inconsistent with those promises. On the contrary, the language we always held towards the Amír with regard to Kuram was that he must not meddle with the tribes of Kuram because we were under obligations to defend them, and we should have defended them if he had attempted to interfere with them. We did not withdraw from Kuram. Sir R. Sandeman was sent there by Lord Northbrook. As one who has been Viceroy of India and knew Sir R. Sandeman, I should like to say that he was an able public servant to whom the public of this country and India owe a great debt. But it does not follow from that that the policy he pursued in one part of the country was necessarily applicable to another part. With regard to the management of the tribes, I understood the Under-Secretary for India to say that there was a great difference between the Pathans and Baluchis and that the system pursued towards the one did not apply to the other.

The Earl of Onslow: I said it was much easier to deal with the Baluchis than the Pathans, because the Baluchis were represented by one man.

The Marquis of Ripon: I had understood the Secretary for War to say something of the kind.

The Marquis of Lansdowne: I said I did not think the Baluchi system should be applied to the Pathan tribes. I said there were certain characteristics, but I believed that by friendly intercourse it was possible even in the case of the Pathans to make some impression.

The Marquis of Ripon: I sincerely hope that the Government will not hastily give up the hope of maintaining the system that has been in force for the last 14 years. It is impossible I think, it is undesirable I am sure, to occupy the Khyber Pass by British troops because of the climatic circumstances of the pass, and therefore I hope that in dealing with the pass her Majesty's Government will give the fullest consideration to the possibility of re-establishing, with modifications it may be, the system previously in force. The arrangements there were under the management of Colonel Warburton. He left only a short time before these operations. Looking to his great influence and peculiar qualifications, whether he would have been able to restrain the Afridis I do not know, and I understand he is now again on the spot, and I hope the Government will not, as I say, hastily adopt the system of occupying the Khyber Pass by British troops. My noble and gallant friend recommended the creation of roads and railroads. He denied that he wished them to enter Afghanistan, but they were to go in that direction through the territory of these tribes. These roads and railroads were to enable the British Government to fulfil their obligations to the Amír. I should very much like to know whether the Amír himself desires that these roads and railroads in his immediate neighbourhood should be made. I am quite certain that if the Amír is now in the mind he was in when I was in India, there are few things he would dislike more than the construction of roads and railways in the direction of his own territory; and when we are told we must do this in order to fulfil our obligations to the Amír, surely it is only reasonable we should ask whether the Amír wishes us to take that mode of fulfilling our obligations. I am not, of course, thinking of entering into any strategical discussion with the noble and gallant lord, but I must make a few observations on that part of the question. In the first place, he will, I am sure, acknowledge that political and financial considerations must also enter into any question of this kind. There are, as the noble and gallant lord knows, military experts of the highest authority and of the greatest and most intimate acquaintance with India and the frontier who differ *in toto* from him, so that we are not dealing now with a question in which you have the opinion of military experts on the one side and the exponents of political and financial considerations on the other. I was sorry to hear my noble and gallant friend say he would not deal with the financial matters. The noble and gallant lord has been not merely Commander-in-Chief, but in that capacity he was a member of the Government, and, therefore, could not separate himself from financial considerations. These considerations enter so intimately into all Indian questions that it is absolutely necessary that the noble lord should deal with them, and deal with them on a broad view. I believe there is nothing which would be so likely to affect injuriously our position in that country as a dispute in regard to the matter of taxation. There are not, in my opinion, fresh sources of taxation available in India at present which would meet any large additional expenditure. The revenue of India grows, but it grows very slowly. When I was there I, with the assistance of Lord Cromer, looked with great care into these financial questions. We were fortunate in being able to make large financial reductions owing to the rate of exchange, but I cannot think there could be a greater danger to the popularity of our rule in India than to embark on a policy which would lead to a large additional expenditure. The credit of India is not unlimited, and if you pursue a policy which will entail upon India, as I believe this policy will, an addition to the army, and, consequently an addition to the annual expenditure of India, you will be involved in difficulties which will far transcend any of those put before us to-night. I am one of those who believe that the best way of dealing with these tribes is to inspire them with friendly

feelings towards us. That was what the noble earl said was the policy of the Government, and the noble marquis used the same language. But these tribes value their independence—which is to the noble marquis a shadow—they value their independence above everything. They are like most mountaineers, extremely attached to their freedom, and if you want to make them your friends and the enemies of your enemies, you must follow a policy which will confirm them in the belief that you do not mean to threaten their independence or to take over what the noble lord called the political control of their country. I hope that that will be the policy which will be pursued by the Government of India. I was full of hope at the commencement of this evening that that would be so. Of course, I recognise that my noble friend, the Secretary of State for War, desired to the utmost of his ability to say something in defence of the policy of the hon. and gallant lord on the cross benches. I hope he was thinking of his noble friend at the moment he spoke, and that the noble earl, the Under-Secretary of State, may, in the absence of the Prime Minister, be taken as the real exponent of the Government's policy.

The Duke of Devonshire.

The Duke of Devonshire: Like my noble friend opposite, I very much regret the absence of the Prime Minister, but I think I may assure him that there is not the slightest foundation for the impression he seems to have formed that there is any divergence whatever between the views of the India Office and those expressed by the Secretary of State for War. I do not know what the foundation is upon which my noble friend forms his impression, unless it is that my noble friend, the Secretary for War, spoke with great respect of the very able speech delivered by the noble and gallant lord, and pointed out that if it was an exposition of what is called the "forward policy," it was an exposition of that policy very different indeed from some which we have been accustomed to hear. I find some difficulty in understanding what is the divergence which my noble friend opposite seems to find between the speech of the Secretary for War and the despatch of the Secretary of State for India. My noble friend has explained that it is not possible after all that has happened to revert to the policy which is associated with the name of the late Lord Lawrence, in respect to frontier affairs. That principle is also fully admitted in the despatch to the Government of India to which reference has been made. That despatch contains this passage:—"As communications multiply so the tribes will mix more freely with British subjects; and this intercourse, becoming closer in the course of years, cannot fail to increase our responsibilities on the frontier by drawing the tribesmen out of their highlands into closer contact with their neighbours and with your officers. Whether the risks of collision will have been thereby augmented or diminished remains to be seen. By care and foresight it may be possible to avoid actual conflict, and the effect of frequent intercourse may be to mitigate the lawless and predatory instincts of the hillmen without interfering with the tribal system of self-government." That, my lords, is very much to the effect of what my noble friend has just said. My noble friend opposite said that the true way of dealing with these tribes was to cultivate friendly relations with them. But it is admitted by the late Government of India and by the present Government that our responsibilities, with regard to these tribes, have greatly increased; and the system which may have been best a few years ago is one which now can be no longer pursued. The noble lord said that the policy, which is advocated by Lord Roberts, is the policy which led to two Afghan wars. I see no trace or indication of any reversion to that policy. What has been said by Lord Roberts could not, and still less could what has been said by the Secretary of State for War, be regarded as a policy of aggression upon independent tribes. Upon which independent tribe do we propose to make any aggression now? The only question is how a certain number of tribes, with which every one admits our relations to be closer, are to be treated. My noble friend says that they cannot be dealt with exactly on the same plan as used to be adopted; and I fail to see that my noble friend opposite, by vague allusions to the cultivation of friendly relations, has suggested any other policy, and he is absolutely mistaken in his assumption that if the Prime Minister were present to-night he would have given the slightest shadow of confirmation to the inference which the noble marquis has drawn. The words which the Prime Minister used during the debate on the Address were these:—"If you look into this country, wherever you see a barbarous mountain population by the side of a civilised population dwelling in the plains, those people have never been able to live long in peace with each other; and it has been the rule that ultimately the mountain population must accept the civilisation of its neighbour. . . . I trust that we shall be able to perform what is the inevitable conquest by the gentle means of example and gradual intercourse." I have not heard a word to-night which departed in the slightest degree from the principle thus laid down. (Hear, hear.)

The Earl of Kimberley.

The Earl of Kimberley: I have not the quotation before me, but I believe there was a further statement, to the effect that the conquest was not to be made by military occupation. What Lord Salisbury said was that nothing should be done beyond friendly intercourse, and I do not suppose that any one would endeavour to bring "friendly tribes" into closer relations by force. But I am quite unable to agree with the noble duke as to there being no aggressive policy advocated by those who take the military view of this question. I had great pleasure in hearing from the noble and gallant lord a statement of the policy which he would pursue; but I must say that that policy was, as I always understood it to be, an aggressive policy. The object which the noble lord has in view is to bring the whole of these tribes under our control. That is what we understand to be the "forward policy," and such a policy I believe to be calamitous to India. I distinguish that policy from those police measures on our frontier which we may have to take from time to time. As to the Lawrence policy, I entirely agree with the noble duke that the time has gone by when we can revert to it; but the question is, What have we in view? Do we merely wish to establish friendly relations on our frontier, or do we look forward to having direct control of these tribes? I do not assert that Lord Roberts would advocate immediate measures for that purpose; but my objection to that policy is that it is a policy which is pursued steadily by a party who influence the Indian Government. It is constantly the cause of forward movements, not for the purpose of protecting merely our own frontier, or for reasons of police, but for the purpose of little by little creeping up until the whole of this vast territory is under our direct control. I believe that the attempt to do that is fraught with danger in India, because, far from being likely to bring about better relations, I believe it to be a certain mode of exasperating the tribes and preventing friendly relations. It has the directly opposite result to the civilising process alluded to by Lord Salisbury. You irritate the tribes and spend large sums in attempting to subjugate them; and after all when you have carried your object into effect, far from finding communications with Afghanistan safer, you find them more dangerous than ever. For unless this process has gone on for a quarter of a century or so, if you are in difficulty, the tribes will seize the opportunity of rising against you. And what would be your position if you were engaged in any large military occupation of Afghanistan and the tribes rose behind you? The great difficulty in conducting military occupations in Afghanistan against such a Power as Russia consists in the maintenance of communications with India. When I was Secretary of State, we were alarmed by a prospect of possible collision with Russia; and I know that the anxieties of the Indian Government were largely directed to the maintenance of the long line of communications. Now, if you have these tribes brought under your control against their will, will they not certainly attack these communications? But I have a stronger reason for deprecating this policy. I believe it is certain to produce discontent and dissatisfaction throughout India. I believe now that it has had considerable effect; and the strength of our position in India does not rest upon the command of certain passes, but upon the content and prosperity of the people governed. And that is a consideration so important that, although for stringent military reasons you may from time to time have to make forward moves, we must deprecate as far as possible any policy which unnecessarily extends our obligations to the north. India has been suffering from terrible calamities, and though I am glad to hear that she is recovering to some extent, yet the prosperity of the country must be seriously injured by such difficulties. India has also to contend with the question of currency and the scarcity of money. At such a moment it is most unfortunate that we should find ourselves engaged in this frontier war. It is most important that we should be able to agree in emphatically repudiating a military frontier policy; and whilst we are prepared to take every possible step to improve our friendly relations with the tribes, we should avoid anything which could interfere with their independence—such as placing posts in their territory where they are not absolutely required, or making roads for military purposes in passes which it is not essential for us to hold. On every ground we should abstain from any such provocation. I heard—I will not say with alarm — but with modified satisfaction, some remarks made by the noble marquis opposite; and, although I do not seek to establish a difference of opinion of a serious kind between noble lords on the bench opposite, I do say that there was a very different tone indeed running through the speech of the noble marquis from that of the Under-Secretary for India. No one who heard that speech could help feeling that it was not altogether in accordance with the spirit of the declarations made by the Secretary of State for India in Parliament, in the country, and in the despatch now on the table. It is plain that the noble marquis sympathises with the forward policy advocated by Lord Roberts, and he let us see plainly that he would be in favour of extending our control over all these tribes. That is exactly what we deprecate, and the country at the present time does not desire. In regard to the relations with Russia, I think there has been a disposition to undervalue the agreement as to the Afghan frontier arrived at with Russia. Of course, that arrangement is not a protection in case of war, but by having laid down by treaty a distinct line of frontier between Afghanistan and Russia we have, I believe, entirely put a stop to those expeditions and incursions into parts of Afghanistan which presumably took place when there was no defined boundary, which were of a nature to give rise to complications in time of peace and which might easily lead to some disagreeable controversy with Russia, and possibly even to a quarrel. With regard to the North-Western frontier, there was a very remarkable example of the way in which this treaty arrangement works. There were disagreements between the Russians and the Afghans, and, instead of any measures being taken of a forcible kind, the Russians represented to us that they had reason to complain of certain proceedings on the part of the Afghans, and, recognising us as responsible for their actions, asked us to take steps with the Amír to put an end to the annoyance. What was the result? We made our representations to the Amír, and a commission was sent by us to meet a Russian commission on the frontier, and all these differences were peacably and satisfactorily arranged. These are the advantages gained by having a distinct line of frontier. I entirely agree with what was said by the noble marquis on one point—namely, the good effect of the Durand agreement—and I am the more disposed to take that view because I am jointly responsible with him for that commission. I am quite certain that the noble marquis did not exaggerate the difficulties in which we were placed with the Amír before the agreement was made. Those difficulties were of a very serious nature indeed, and by the Durand agreement a complete stop was put to them, and I believe that our relations with the Amír were established on a safer footing than before. A sure and certain proof of that was the manner in which the Amír behaved during the recent frontier war, when he behaved in a most friendly manner. (Cheers.)

Lord Roberts explained with regard to the Kandahar line that since its construction the situation had become entirely changed by the occupation of Merv by Russia.

The House rose at 25 minutes to 9 o'clock.

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